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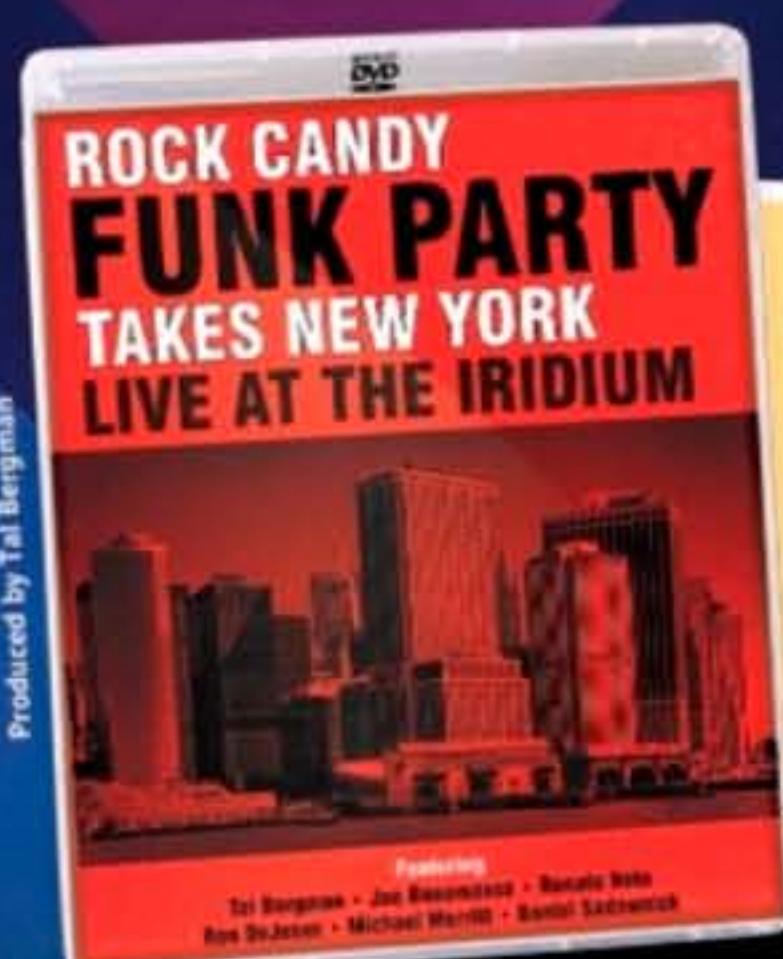


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CONTENTS

APRIL 2014 | VOLUME 25, NUMBER 4 | BASSPLAYER.COM

D B S T W

32 NATHAN EAST

Having Gotten Lucky (again) as a sideman on a huge 2013 hit, East is finally heading in the direction of solo artist—30-plus years into his career. By Chris Jisi

44 NEW GEAR FROM NAMM 2014

From the latest lightweight combos to great budget basses to freaky (and freakier) effects, this year's SoCal gear show didn't disappoint. By the BASS PLAYER Staff

72 JAMES GANG'S "FUNK #49"

Dale Peters anchors a long-enduring, influential groove-fest from 1970. By Brian Fox

Cover Photo: John Abbott

DEPARTMENTS

- 10 **COMMUNITY**
The Real World, Dig My Rig, Court of Opinion
- 14 **EXPO**
Flea goes unplugged
- 82 **BOBBY'S BASSMENT**
Stalking the perfect P

BASS NOTES

- 16 **BP PRESENTS** Top names rumble at Bay Area venues



- 18 **BRIAN MARSHALL**
Alternative approach with **Alter Bridge**
- 20 **LEXXI FOX** Balls out with **Steel Panther**
- 24 **MATT LUX** Laid-back magic with **Iron & Wine**
- 27 **MILES MOSLEY** Upright effect at BASS PLAYER LIVE!
- 28 **BP RECOMMENDS**

SOUNDRoom

- 56 **TECH 21** VT Bass DI
- 58 **MXR** M81 Bass Preamp



- 64 **CARVIN** PB5 5-string

WOODSHED

- 66 **JAZZ CONCEPTS**
Ware it's at
- 70 **BLUES YOU CAN USE**
The Shannon sound

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BRIAN FOX

Hoarders: BASS PLAYER Edition

I HAVE A GUILTY PLEASURE. (OKAY, I ACTUALLY HAVE A FEW ... DON'T JUDGE ME!)

If you've ever caught the A&E television program *Hoarders*, you might share it with me. For those of you who have better things to do than veg out to reality television programs, allow me to explain: in this documentary series, teams of psychologists and professional organizers stage interventions with individuals whose household clutter and obsessive hoarding has reached epic, dangerous proportions. By providing them with manpower and counseling, they try to empower the troubled subjects to make better decisions to reclaim their living space.

BASS PLAYER—along with our sister publications *Guitar Player*, *Keyboard*, *Electronic Musician*, and *Mix*—is moving editorial offices in coming weeks, and it's forced me to come to terms with a painful fact: I am a bass hoarder. To be fair, much of the wall-to-wall gear surrounding us is here out of necessity. After all, how could any self-respecting bass magazine function without benchmark reference gear? At least, that's what I've told myself as I've continued to add to the pile with my own acquisitions. Keeping a Precision Bass around for reference—that seems reasonable. But making sure that at any point there are maple-fingerboard, rosewood-fingerboard, flatwound-strung, roundwound-strung, and tape-wound strung varieties of said reference bass within easy reach—that's perhaps a bit extreme. Without the help of professional sorters, I now have the unenviable task of "thinning the herd," keeping only what is absolutely essential for the business of magazine making. It's pretty brutal, but in needing to make tough decisions about what we *really* need around the office, I've been able to think more self-reflexively about what gear is absolutely essential. My conclusion: all of it. So if you'll excuse me, I have to go find a storage unit so I won't have to part with any of this precious gear.

Do you suffer from the same affliction? If so, I'd love to hear about what you've managed to part with, and what you'd never, ever give up. Post it on our Facebook wall at [facebook.com/bassplayermag](https://www.facebook.com/bassplayermag). I assure you, you are not alone.

BZ!!!
O—"

COURT OF OPINION

What's your favorite James Jamerson bass line?

Join the conversation at facebook.com/bassplayermag.



My Jamerson favorite? "Bernadette"
—Jason Richards



Stevie Wonder, "For Once In My Life"
—Pete Christiansson



"Darling Dear," but there really are so many other absolute gems to choose from. Absolute genius.
—Pete Clark



"(Your Love Keeps Lifting Me) Higher and Higher"
—Craig McIntyre



Asking us to pick a favorite Jamerson bass line is like asking, "What's the best breath you've ever taken?"
—Tommy Tucker



"Fork in the Road" by Smokey Robinson & the Miracles and "Save the Children" by Marvin Gaye
—Tanisha Jackson



"Papa Was A Rolling Stone"
—Brad Mello



"Theme from 'S.W.A.T.'"
—Cliff Stankiewicz



"Love Is Here and Now You're Gone"
—Kyle Younger



"How Long Has That Evening Train Been Gone," by the Supremes
—Mark Anderson



"I Was Made to Love Her"
—Ralk T. Koenig



"Ain't Too Proud to Beg," "Ain't No Mountain High Enough" by Marvin and Tammy, "Bernadette"—the list is endless, like his legacy. Genius. —John Kenna

TIMELINE

This Month In Bass: April

- 2ND** Fender's Don Randall gives the public its first look at the Precision Bass in the April issue of *Musicians Trade*, **1952**.
- 3RD** Scott LaFaro, best known for his work with Bill Evans, is born, **1936**.
- 4TH** Jazz bassist Gene Ramey born, **1913**.
- 5TH** Patent issued for the Ampeg Baby Bass pickup, **1966**.
- 6TH** Paul Young hits No.1 with *The Secret Of Association*, which featured Pino Palladino's fretless Music Man StingRay work on songs like "Every-time You Go Away," **1985**.
- 7TH** Paul McCartney formally announces that he's leaving the Beatles, **1970**.
- 8TH** The Supremes record "Where Did Our Love Go," with James Jamerson on bass, **1964**.
- 10TH** Italian double bass virtuoso and composer Domenico Dragonetti born, **1763**. Marvin Gaye records his version of "I Heard It Through The Grapevine," with James Jamerson on bass, **1967**.
- 13TH** Jefferson Airplane and Hot Tuna bassist Jack Casady born, **1944**. Slap funk icon Louis Johnson born, **1955**.
- 15TH** Upright master and session king Richard Davis born, **1930**.
- 17TH** Jazz bassist Buster Williams born, **1942**. David Brown and Santana begin recording sessions for *Abraxas*, **1970**.
- 18TH** Chic's Bernard Edwards dies, **1996**; Double Trouble bass man Tommy Shannon born, **1946**.
- 21ST** Alice Cooper, boosted by Dennis Dunaway bass lines, is No. 1 with *Billion Dollar Babies*, **1973**.
- 22ND** Composer, bandleader, and bass legend Charles Mingus born, **1922**. Composer and sideman Paul Chambers born, **1935**.
- 24TH** Bandleader and composer Stafford James born, **1926**.
- 25TH** Credence Clearwater Revival's Stu Cook born, **1945**. Wilton Felder's sweet line on the Jackson 5's "ABC" takes it to the top, **1970**.
- 26TH** Nashville studio icon Dave Pomeroy born, **1956**.
- 28TH** Roger Waters' lyrics and bass lines help take Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon* to No. 1, **1973**.



THE REAL WORLD

Jason Raso

Home base Guelph, Ontario, Canada

Occupation Musician, bass and guitar instructor

Gigs The Jason Raso Quartet

Basses Spector Coda 4, Spector NS-5H2, Spector Coda 4 Deluxe fretless

Rig TC Electronic RH450 head and RS210 2x10

Effects TC Electronic Flashback Delay, Corona Chorus, Ditto Looper, and MojoMojo overdrive

Strings, etc. DR Strings Fat Beams

Heroes & inspiration Jaco Pastorius, Marcus

Miller, Stanley Clarke, Charles Mingus, and Paul Chambers

Contact jasonrasomusic.com

How did you come to play bass?

My older, guitar-playing brother suggested I start playing bass. I was 12, and I'd played drums for a short stint.

What's a lesson you've learned along the way?

I've learned to stay true to my writing and playing. I want to play music that I truly believe in.

What are your musical goals?

Continue to write, perform and teach.



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Now to the basses! Left to right, they are: My No. 1, a 1980s St. Blues Blues King IV with DiMarzio pickups and D'Addario EXL170 strings, an '80s Strings & Things Custom Blues King IV with DiMarzios and LaBella Hard Rockin' Steels M41 strings, and an '80s Strings & Things Custom Blues King IV Fretless with DiMarzios and D'Addario EXL170s. This bass is SN 00007, and I believe is the first bass that Strings & Things built to be sold to the public. Next to it is a Warmoth Jazz with EMG pickups and D'Addario ProSteels EPS170s. Some coworkers and I at Backstage Music in Starkville, Mississippi, built this bass in 1992 for a customer. I had the opportunity to purchase it from him a few years later and did not hesitate.

In the middle is a custom-built, 30"-scale Big B Bases 4-string with a Delano pickup, burl madrone top, zircote fingerboard, and D'Addario EXL160s. It was built by Brandon Taylor in Tuscaloosa, Alabama (he has since relocated to Austin, Texas). Next is my 1973-4 Fender Jazz Bass with Seymour Duncan pickups and RotoSound RS66LD strings, 1980s Yamaha BB450 with Seymour Duncan Quarter Pounders and D'Addario EXL170s, 2001 Fender 50th Anniversary Commemorative Precision with GHS Boomers H3045s, and a 1991 Ernie Ball/Music Man StingRay 5 with a Bartolini pickup and D'Addario EXL170-5's, followed by my Amati Kraslice BBb tuba with four rotors. In front is my 1978 Fender Musicmaster Bass with D'Addario EXL160s. All the 4-strings have Hipshot D-Tuners (except the two short-scales) and Leo Quan Badass Bass II bridges (except the two short-scales and the two Fenders). —BOB MCKINNEY

Got a rig you think we'd dig? Send a photo and description to digmyrig@gmail.com.

DIG MY RIG!

I PLAY IN A BLUES BAND, THE POUNDERS, which my best friend and I formed in 1991, but I'm also a mercenary for whoever calls. I love doing musical theatre. In those gigs, I often double on tuba. My rig allows me to do pretty much whatever I want, with the added flexibility of having multiple rigs in different locations at once (e.g., orchestra pit, club, and home).

The amplifiers are a Genz Benz GBE 750; Gallien-Krueger 800RB, 400RB, and MB-150E heads; and Gallien-Krueger MB-150E-112 and MB-112 combos. Speaker cabinets are all Bag Ends: Q-10XB-D, S-15L-D, S-12-D, D-10B-D, S-15X-D, and an S-15-D. I've combined these amplifiers and cabinets in lots of different ways, depending upon my mood, the band I'm playing with, and the size of the venue. On top of the 800RB in the photo is my briefcase full of direct boxes. Inside are a Countryman Type-85 and Aguilar DB 900, Radial Engineering Bassbone, Tech 21 SansAmp Bass Driver, and an Aguilar DB 924 outboard preamp.



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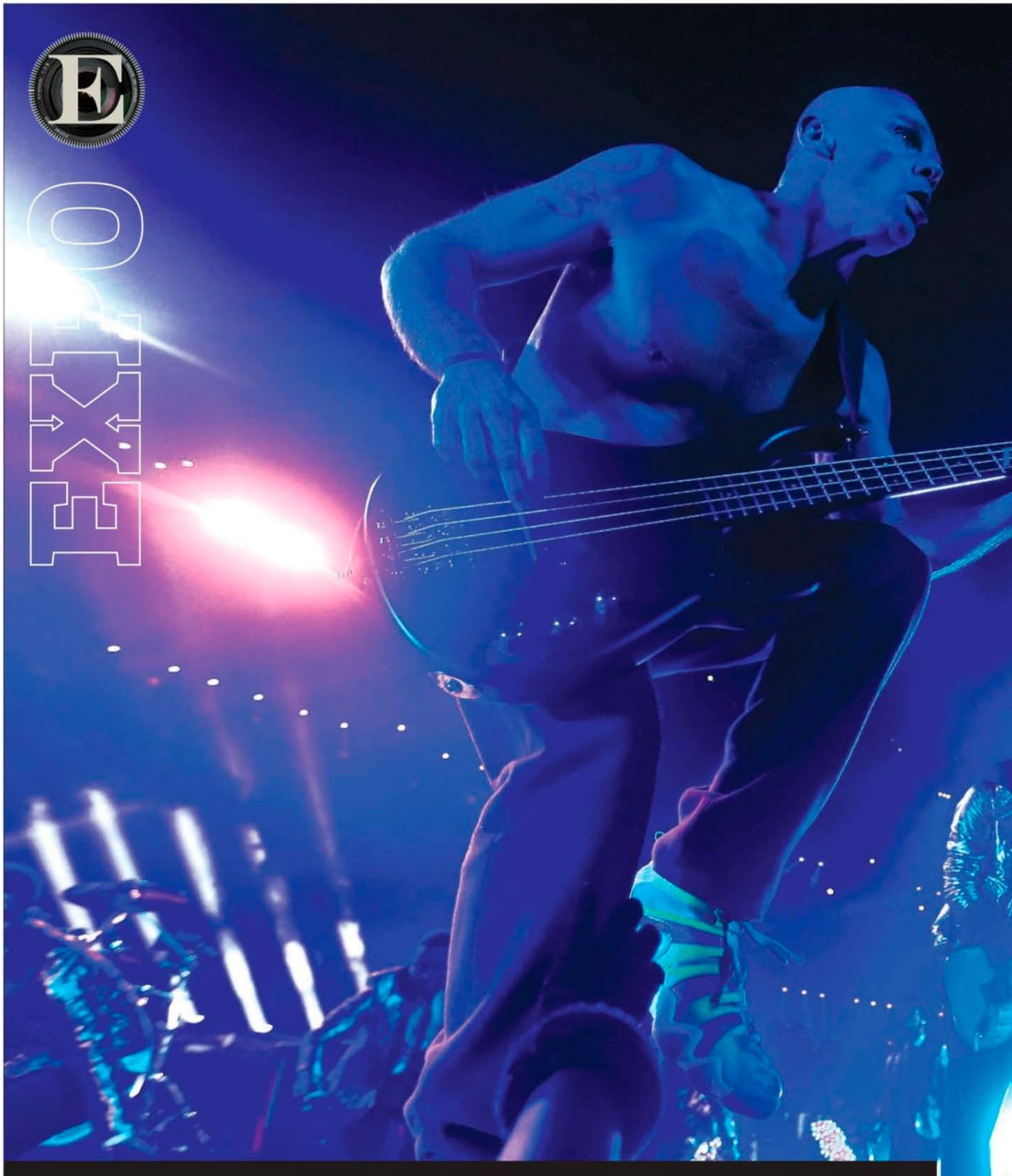
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EXO



Flea Ballin'

At the halftime show for the NFL's Super Bowl XLVIII, Flea of Red Hot Chili Peppers debuts the iProfool Z, a Bluetooth-enabled wireless bass transmitter housed in a crotch-mounted sport sock. Get the full story at redhotchilipeppers.com.





BASSNOTES



Thundercat at the Independent

Thundercat displayed flowing, melodic fingerboard prowess on his colorful Ibanez 6-string, kicked down otherworldly space jazz grooves, and sang ethereal George Duke-like vocals. You must see this mind-blowing modern master live.

Bass Player Presents

TEXT & PHOTOS BY JIMMY LESLIE

LAST YEAR, BASS PLAYER BEGAN CO-HOSTING CONCERTS BY SOME OF the planet's premier bassists at hip venues around the magazine's home base in the San Francisco Bay Area. Recently, D'Addario, Planet Waves, and Hartman Pedals sponsored some inspiring evenings of bass craft at BP Presents happenings featuring pioneers, living legends, and future hall of famers. Here are some photos and recaps of what went down. Keep your eyes on bassplayer.com for news on upcoming artists appearing at BP's monthly Presents events.

Kai Eckhardt's Zeitgeist CD Release at Yoshi's Oakland

"Who is that guy? Is it Stanley? Is it Marcus? No, it's just me," said Kai Eckhardt as he took the stage. He proceeded to prove why he belongs in the same category with those cats.



The Yellowjackets with Felix Pastorius at Yoshi's Oakland
Jaco's son succeeded the irreplaceable Jimmy Haslip in the deep end, and curious players came to see how Pastorius would live up to both legacies. The verdict—Felix can flat out play.



George Porter Jr. at the Sweetwater Music Hall
Porter's thumb could have pulled off this gig by itself. Instead he put on a syncopation clinic leading his quintessential New Orleans band—the Runnin' Pardners—on a rare West Coast appearance.



Mike Stern Band Featuring Anthony Jackson at Yoshi's SF
Jackson played his new hybrid Fodera Anthony Jackson Presentation II Bass, and utilized every inch of the fingerboard as he followed Stern's twists and turns like a linebacker keyed in on a running back.



Christian McBride Trio at Yoshi's Oakland

McBride demonstrated impeccable groove and intonation as well as a ton of heart and soul on a variety of originals, classics by Monk and Coltrane, and even a jazzy ode to Michael Jackson. McBride used his masterful upright fingerstyle technique to convey a warm personality that shined through in every phrase.





ALTER BRIDGE

Brian Marshall

Alter'd Tuning

BY JIMMY LESLIE | PHOTOGRAPH BY AUSTIN HARGRAVE

"I'M NOT ONE TO SIT STILL TOO LONG," SAYS BRIAN Marshall. "If there's room to move around without compromising the song, I'll do it." Marshall's powerful presence, sense for melody, and concrete timing are the foundation upon which Creed and Alter Bridge are built. With Creed on indefinite hiatus, Alter Bridge is forging forward on its fourth CD, *Fortress*, where Marshall's detuned presence in the low end is a consistent hallmark.

Do you have a primary instrument?

Just when I think I do, the situation changes. I experiment at sound-check each night, paying close attention to the acoustics; not only does my

No. 1 bass change, but I wind up playing different basses on a given song. I listen to the mix and compare three Sadowsky 5-strings that are very similar—aside from their wood combinations—and I'm consistently surprised by which one sounds best from stage to stage.

I actually don't use Sadowsky basses in the studio; I've used a Music Man StingRay 5 ever since Creed's *Human Clay*. I don't attack the bass as hard in the studio. It's more about finesse. I like being able to attack the Sadowsky hard onstage and still

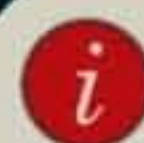
get a consistent tone and rumble in the low end, but in the studio, I find that the StingRay has a piano-like clarity that comes across really well on record.

What's your tuning?

To match Mark Tremonti's lead guitar, my primary tuning is a half-step below standard, with the 4th string dropped a whole-step further [$B_b D_b A_b D_b G_b$], but I'm flexible with the 5th string's tuning depending on what notes become dominant during the songwriting process. On this record, I tuned the 5th string up a half-step to *B* on "Waters Rising" to make the open string applicable in the verse. On "Cry of Achilles"—which is in standard tuning—I dropped the 5th string to *A* to match the 3rd string, so I could have that low *A* in a bluesy walk through the solo section. I have to remain aware or else I'm in trouble in the other sections.

Do you ever play with a pick?

I'd rather not, but I grab a Dunlop medium when a song screams out for it. Generally, I anchor my thumb at the base of the neck pickup and pluck with my index finger until a part requires me to mix in my middle finger—perhaps something quicker, percussive, or muted. For a passage of fast, straight 16th-notes like on the verse of "One Day Remains" [*One Day Remains*, Wind-up], I'll grab the pick in order to stay consistent at that tempo, and then I put the pick in my mouth and play the other parts with my fingers. I'll do whatever the song requires to make it groove. **BP**



INFO



Alter Bridge, *Fortress*
[EMI Label Services, 2013]

LISTEN

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STEEL PANTHER

Lexxi Foxx Bitchin' Bass

BY JIMMY LESLIE | PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID E. JACKSON

"THERE'S A LOT MORE TO BEING A BASSIST THAN SIMPLY playing well," says mock hair metal master Lexxi Foxx of Steel Panther. "In the '80s, metal bassists such as Eric Brittingham [Cinderella], Jeff Pilson [Dokken], and Rudy Sarzo [Ozzy, Quiet Riot, Whitesnake] were all-around badasses who could sing and hold their own onstage. And they looked bitchin'." Foxx rocks

his locks so hard that he takes hair solos rather than bass solos. His cuddly demeanor and humble take on his own playing make it easy to overlook Foxx' solid supporting lines, steely tone, and that he keeps up with shredder Satchel's six-string heroics.

What matters most about a bass?

Size is key for me. I want my bass to be as small and lightweight as possible, so I can move around and look foxy. I also need a well-balanced bass that's easy to control while I flip it around and do kicks. I can't have a heavy bass that gives me backaches to the point where I need a massage every day.

Girls don't really pay attention to how many notes you play.

It's about moving with your instrument, and making sure the instrument is a part of you. Every woman in the audience needs to understand that the bass could be her. You need to act like you own your instrument, and that you know what you're doing up there! I'm not trying to impress anybody but chicks. That may offend some people, but I'm sorry. I do just enough to get by, and try to look as bitchin' as I can.

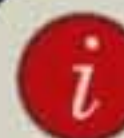
What makes for a sexier bass sound, playing with a pick or playing with your fingers?

It depends on the song. I use a Dunlop pick to get a nice crunchy sound on fast songs such as "Eyes of a Panther" and "Turn Out the Lights." I also use a chorus pedal to pick up some higher frequencies. I play fingerstyle for a smoother, softer sound on chill tunes.

How is a great hair solo like a great bass solo?

'80s metal bass players like Billy Sheehan shredded bass solos. I appreciate that. But for a guy like me who can't play all kinds of crazy licks, just playing the bass is bitchin'. It's only got four strings, and it's a good way to sneak into a band. I like to feature the solidness of a bass. If you can't shred, at least be able to count and look good.

Pink and purple are cool colors for a bass. I try to stay away from black and white, because they tend to blend in with the background equipment. If you've got a bass, it should be colorful. Like doing a hair solo, it's unlike anything else. I leave the solos to



INFO



Steel Panther, *All You Can Eat* [Open E/Kobalt, 2014]

LISTEN

Basses Custom Kramer Lexxi Foxx Signature prototype
Strings Dunlop Nickel Wound (Medium)
Rig "I use Gallien-Krueger heads and cabinets because they deliver awesome ass in the low end. I don't even know the models."

Effects MXR M83 Bass Chorus Deluxe

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Watch the video for the debut single "Party Like Tomorrow Is the End of the World," directed by Rob Riggie. bassplayer.com

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Satchel. If I can flip my hair around and get chicks—that's why I wanted to be in a band anyway.

What tends to seal the deal?

Looking good. Wearing makeup and hairspray, and getting your kicks frosted. Chicks dig that you know how to do make up, that you got your kicks frosted, and that you go to a tanning booth. It's what dudes did in the '80s, and we're trying to bring that back. It comes down to taking care of yourself, and how you look.

Gorgeous looks can overshadow skills. What track from *All You Can Eat* best demonstrates your playing?

Satchel challenged me more with this material than anything we've ever done—especially on the first track, "Pussywhipped." That bass line is all over the place. I practiced every night for a month and a half to get up to speed. When I grew up music was more complicated and you had to practice a lot to play it. These days it's more important to simply hold down the fort. It was good to get back to practicing. "Pussywhipped" is a blast to play.

How do you capture Steel Panther's unbridled beastly energy in the studio?

Sometimes it's drugs, although Steel Panther's songs are so badass that I'm inspired to play them even when nobody's there to watch me flip my hair. I'm not thinking about how amazing my bass playing is onstage, but something takes over in the studio that goes back to when I started. I sit there in my

sweatpants and just jam. I really do want to play as well as I can for the one or two days that it takes me to record the bass.

Who was your favorite bassist growing up?

Rudy Sarzo. He played with the best guitar players, and he was just a solid, bitchin'-lookin' bass player. I wanted to be like that dude. He just held it down solid. I met him in Vegas, and he was awesome. He's a sweetheart, and was humbled to have inspired me.

Do you have any words of wisdom for players who dream of being a bass god?

Getting chicks is one reason to play in a band, but music is such a trip that it will give you goosebumps. When I got my first bass at age 13, it didn't take much for me to play along with records, develop my ear, and figure out how to play a bass line. It'd sit there all night until I got it, and do another one the next night. It's good to practice, of course. Anybody can be a badass, but if you just play the tunes, be nice and look bitchin' ... I mean, just being a cool dude to hang out with is way more important than being a shredder and being a dick. **BP**

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PHAROAH SANDERS, IRON & WINE

Matthew Lux On Subtlety & Taste

BY E.E. BRADMAN | PHOTOGRAPH BY ARIELE MONTI

TO ATTEND AN IRON & WINE SHOW THESE DAYS IS TO BE WHISKED BACK TO the heyday of AM radio, when the Wrecking Crew weaved its particularly L.A. magic for a long roster of pre-disco, pre-punk legends like the Carpenters and the 5th Dimension. That sunny SoCal '70s vibe comes quite naturally to Iron & Wine frontman Sam Beam, and on this particular night, his expansive band—three sweet singers, saxes who doubled on woodwinds, a magician on various keyboards, a three-piece string section, and a rhythm section that could whisper or roar—moved with the well-oiled precision of a sparkling Hollywood revue.

Near the back of the stage, Matthew Lux and his sleek Elrick 5-string laid the foundation with warm yet clear, authoritative tone and an easy groove that sat perfectly in the mix, testament to almost a decade with the band. But Lux's laid-back magic has more colorful roots than one might first expect. In a career that stretches back to the early '90s, the Chicago native has lent his unflappable, distinctive feel to a wide range of projects, including the post-rock of Smog and Azita, the funky sampladelica of Tranquility Bass, the orchestral pop of Plush, the synthy bump of Wilco side project Pronto, and gigs with the Windy City's heaviest jazz musicians. Would this audience of young lumberjacks, librarians,

i INFO

Basses Elrick Expat NJS 5, Elrick Gold Series NJS 5, Benedict Lang double bass

Strings Ernie Ball flatwounds or La Bella tapewounds on electric, gut strings on upright with Velvet Animas as backup

Rig Walter Woods, Aguilar DB212 2x12

Effects Korg Micro KORG XL, Longwave pocket theremin, Big Briar (Moog) 12-stage Phaser, Moog MF-107 FreqBox, Malekko B:Assmaster, EBS MultiDrive, Hardwire DL-8 Stereo Delay, Boss CS-3 Compressor/Sustainer, DOD DFX-9 Digital Delay, MXR M-104 Distortion+

Other Lehle A/B box, Souldier straps, unstamped French bow

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You can find Matt at mattluxmusic.com, bassplayer.com/april2014

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and their ladies—piercings and plaid aplenty—recognize Lux from his intense throwdowns with Pharoah Sanders or his eclectic, astute grooves with Isotope 217? Perhaps not, but it didn't matter. Tonight was all that counted, and when it was over, the lights came up on a roomful of smiles.

Did you listen to '70s California rock as a kid?

No. I liked the Beatles and The Band, but I didn't get into the rock of my generation. I mostly grew up on R&B, Philly soul and stuff, and I was into house music. When I was like, 14, and he was like 18, [iconic house producer and DJ] Derrick Carter was a clerk at Importes Etc., and I would get off school, come to the store, and buy whatever he told me to buy. And then I got into jazz and classical music, Fela, dub, Brazilian music, Miles' '70s stuff—I mostly just zipped right by rock & roll, man.

How'd you get your first electric?

My brother gave me a 1976 Fender Jazz Bass when I was six years old. I played just that instrument for over 20 years. All my gear got stolen, and I was crushed. Back then, I thought the tone was in the stuff. It was hard lesson to learn.

You started early on upright, too?

I was about 11 when I heard a bass solo on the radio one night, and then the DJ announced that it was Ray Brown, and that he was in town all weekend. My dad took me down to see him, Ray blew me away, and he and my dad hit it off. They wound up playing golf the next day, and Ray Brown convinced my dad that he needed to buy me an upright and insist that I play it.

What's your approach to chops vs. taste?

I try to have a simple quality to my playing, adding a little thing so folks know I deal with the harmony on the proper level, without overdoing it. Using two notes instead of a hundred.

How'd you get the Pharoah Sanders gig?

My friend Rob Mazurek got a grant to bring some artists to Brazil, and he put a band together. When we played with Pharoah, he was getting down and dancing and having a really great time, and after it was over, he was like, If you guys are into it, we should make this a band. And we were like, Do we want to be in a band with Pharoah Sanders? Um, yes we do! *[Laughs.]*

What has playing with Pharoah taught you about bass?

He doesn't have anything intellectual to say about music—it's all just, Let's play, let's make some sounds. The most technical thing he ever said to me was to move around a little bit when we did vamps. I'm the kind of guy who can just play one note all day, but he told me, "Son, you gotta move it around a little bit." That's it. **BP**



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HIGHLIGHTS FROM BASS PLAYER LIVE!



Miles Mosley Heart & Hands

BY CHRIS JISI | PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX KLUFT

WHILE REGULAR APPEARANCES BY THE world's top bassists have helped provide excitement and a sense of community at BASS PLAYER LIVE! over the years, equally inspiring is the debut of new talent with fresh perspectives on the art and craft of bass. A beacon example of the latter this year was Miles Mosley, a trailblazer in the union of acoustic bass and effects pedals. Mosley opened his well-balanced clinic by commending bassists for being supportive of each other and sharing ideas, declaring each of us thumpers to be "the big heart onstage." He then sang and played a piece from his upcoming CD, employing pizzicato, bow, and effects, along with drummer/producer Tony Austin, before getting into the nuts and bolts of his Blast Cult

upright. Touching upon the sonic hazards he—like countless other bassists—have had to endure playing a traditional double bass in a large ensemble, he described how the construction of his Blast Cult One4Five, with its pickup encased in wood, allows him to turn it up as loud as desired without danger of feedback.

Following the performance of a second duet piece, Miles offered insight into his pedalboard and signal chain. "With an acoustic bass," he explained, "you have to put a compressor first, not to compress the sound but to provide a consistent tone for the rest of the pedals to read." His next recommended piece is a volume pedal, "It's about dynamics; you can't get loud without being soft—every musician needs one." He went on to discuss his use of two distortion pedals. "I use them as a way to EQ the bass before I distort it; so it's boost-distortion-real distortion." Turning to his octave and delay pedals, he demonstrated pitch-shifting and other interesting sounds you can get using the bow that you can't get on a bass guitar. As an aside, he related a story of studying with the late, great jazz bassist Al McKibbon, who stressed the use of the bow to be a complete bassist. "Why," wondered Mosley, "would you only use your fingers and eliminate half the way the instrument is played?" Last, in addition to getting a traditional wah sound, he revealed how keeping his wah pedal all the way down gives him a peak frequency that allows him to cut through a loud band. This was capped by the performance of his third duet piece.

Turning to what he called the final element of his sound, Miles discussed his Aguilar rig and how, set flat, it allows him to start with an ideal tone. Opening the clinic up for questions, he was asked further about how the design of his bass prevented feedback. A key, he allowed, was the instrument's non-vibrating top, which, he added, can be adjusted to vibrate by loosening the soundpost. Additional questions included how he worked on his ability to sing and play, and how the paint and finish on his bass affected the sound. Pre-

paring to perform his fourth and final piece, Mosley remembered one other unique design component of his Blast Cult, whose fingerboard shape is modeled after his 230-year-old upright: Via hydraulics, when he digs in hard, the fingerboard goes down slightly, and consequently, when he plays with a light touch it rises back up. His explosive closing tune with Austin left little doubt that his board was in motion. With the note from his final bow stroke ringing in the room, it became clear that the innovative musical mind of Miles Mosley and the technical innovations of Blast Cult founder Jason Burns (out at the Blast Cult booth) form the kind of dream team that BASS PLAYER LIVE! presents in a unique way. **BP**

INFO

You can watch Mosley's clinic in its entirety at bassplayer.com.

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BP RECOMMENDS

**Rocco Prestia (right) and TOP
back in the day in the East Bay**



TOWER OF POWER

HIPPER THAN HIP: YESTERDAY, TODAY & TOMORROW (LIVE ON THE AIR & IN THE STUDIO 1974) [Real Gone Music]

TOP's latest is a rare find: the legendary horn band with what many believe to be their peak lineup (vocalist Lennie Williams, saxophonist Lenny Pickett, organist Chester Thompson, and guitarist Bruce Conte joining current mainstays drummer Dave Garibaldi, horn co-leaders Emilio Castillo and Doc Kupka, and—of course—bassist **Rocco Prestia**) on a 1974 live studio recording for a Long Island radio station. Filling two CDs—and with the only hitch being a slightly lower than desirable bass mix, at times—*Hipper Than Hip* sizzles. The 11-piece unit, which was then promoting its just-released/now-classic fourth album, *Back to Oakland*, launches with that platter's combustible finger-buster, "Oakland Stroke," and ultimate instrumental jam, "Squib Cakes." Rocco really drives the next three, earlier hits: brighter takes on

the swinging "This Time It's Real" and funky "Soul Vaccination," and the ballad smash, "Still a Young Man" (dig his barking P-Bass tone). TOP standards "So Very Hard to Go" and "Get Yo' Feet Back on the Ground," as well as the James-Brown-ish "Clean Slate," round out Disc One.

In hindsight, Disc Two's openers, the 6/8 horn ballad "Time Will Tell" and the eighth-note rocker "Man from the Past," should have been swapped for two other tracks on *Back to Oakland* that would become TOP trademarks: "Can't You See" and "Don't Change Horses." But it's interesting to hear what was considered more radio-worthy back then. A brisk take on "Down to the Nightclub" followed by the 12/8 ballad "Just When We Start Makin' It" leads to perhaps Rocco and the band's finest moment, a herculean, 18-minute version of their first-album syncopated groove romp "Knock Yourself Out" (smile at the variety of ways Rocco traverses the two-chord vamp behind Thompson's awesome organ solo, and oh, that bass break at 15:29!). Remarkably, the East Bay lads still have plenty of energy for a rousing "What Is Hip?" as the closer. —CHRIS JISI



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MIKE GORDON
OVERSTEP [Megaplum]

In between recording albums for Phish, Gordon has completed his fourth solo album, which blends funk, rock, reggae, and indie influences into one LP. With the help of drummer Matt Chamberlain, Gordon seems to have found a voice capable of seamlessly combining tracks as disparate as the dub-themed "Yarmouth Road" and the funky envelope filter-infused "Tiny Little World." Gordon's greatest feat, however, may be the warm and round studio tone he gets while sticking to his traditional picking technique. —JON D'AURIA



SNOW OWL
NORMAS [Inner Circle Music]

Using the name Snow Owl, Colombian-born bassist/composer **Juan Garcia-Herreros** continues to develop his considerable gifts on his ambitious third solo CD. Garcia-Herreros' "standards" refers more to established jazz and Latin jazz structures than cover-songs, and he dives right into "Señor C.P.," an angular, odd-meter, complex Afro-Cuban excursion for his multi-horn and percussion ensemble (no "Mr. P.C." minor blues here). "Huellas" (meaning "footprints") showcases JGH's contrapuntal writing, as well as his building, probing solo. "Impulso Interno" maintains dense, horn-led ensemble writing, with deep grooves courtesy of the thunderous 36"-scale contrabass JGH

designed with Austrian luthier Andreas Neubauer. Back-to-back ballads "Cuerpo Y Alma" and "Som I Serem" are nuanced pieces built upon bass clarinet and chordal contrabass, and piano-backed bass exploration, respectively. The showpiece scorcher is "Touched," Jaco-reminiscent in its "Havona"-like harmony, ear-grabbing 5ths, and relentless, percolating 16ths behind the soloists. Keep an eye on this owl. —CHRIS JISI



RALPHE ARMSTRONG
HOME BASS [Detroit Music Factory/
Mack Avenue]

The Detroit bass master's upright prowess is spotlighted on this sturdy live set with his quintet. Armstrong bows "The Star-Spangled Banner" unaccompanied, to start, before tackling the bass standard "So What," with pizzicato and bow solos bookending his quintet's solo turns. Elsewhere, "Freedom Jazz Dance" begins with Ralphie's fierce, rubato improv, while "Dear Old Stockholm" is an inspired bowed bass and piano duet with Henry Gibson. After bluesin' it up on "Stormy Monday," Ralphie turns to his electric bass and effects pedals for the trippy, jam-out closer, "Miles We Got to Go." —CHRIS JISI



YOUNG THE GIANT
MIND OVER MATTER

[Fueled By Ramen]

Young The Giant's sophomore album continues where their debut left off, adding glimpses of progressive sparks to their polished indie-alternative sound, thanks in part to the direction of producer Justin Meldal-Johnsen. **Payam Doostzadeh** furthers their evolution as he abandons safer, linear bass lines in favor of exploratory riffs with accents of tempo changes and groovy fills. Whether he's playing his G&L 4-string or blaring on synth bass, his tone booms. —JON D'AURIA



THE PIXIES
EP 2 [Pixies]

Amidst the transition between bass players Kim Deal, Kim Shattuck, and Paz Lenchantin, the Pixies released their second in an installment of EPs where Frank Black enlisted past collaborator **Simon Ding Archer** to track the bass. The four-song record puts the focus primarily on the guitar riffs, though Archer steps up to drive the track "Snakes" with a powerful march. "Magdalena" serves as another bass highlight as Archer fills the bottom with his distorted lines over haunting riffs. —JON D'AURIA



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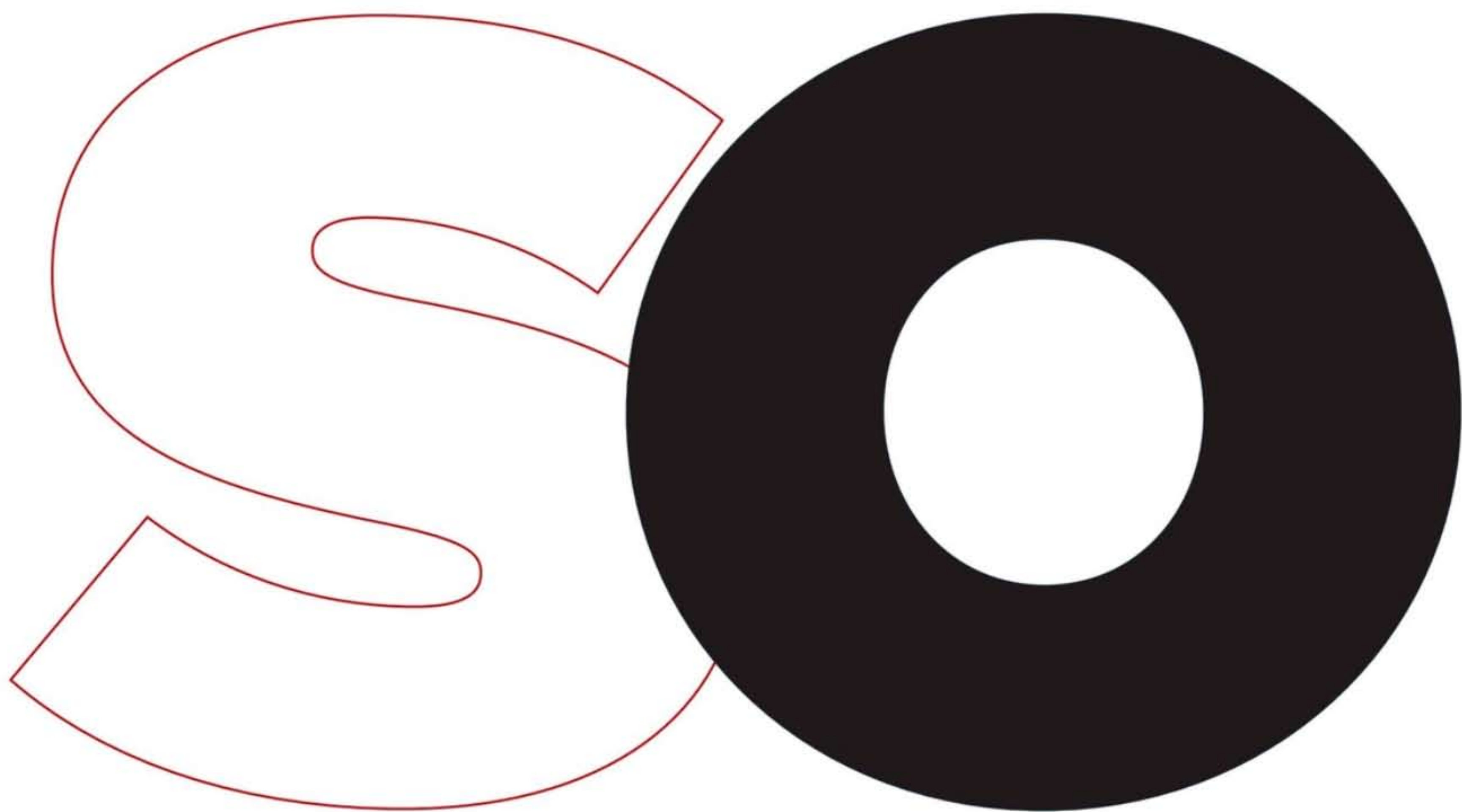


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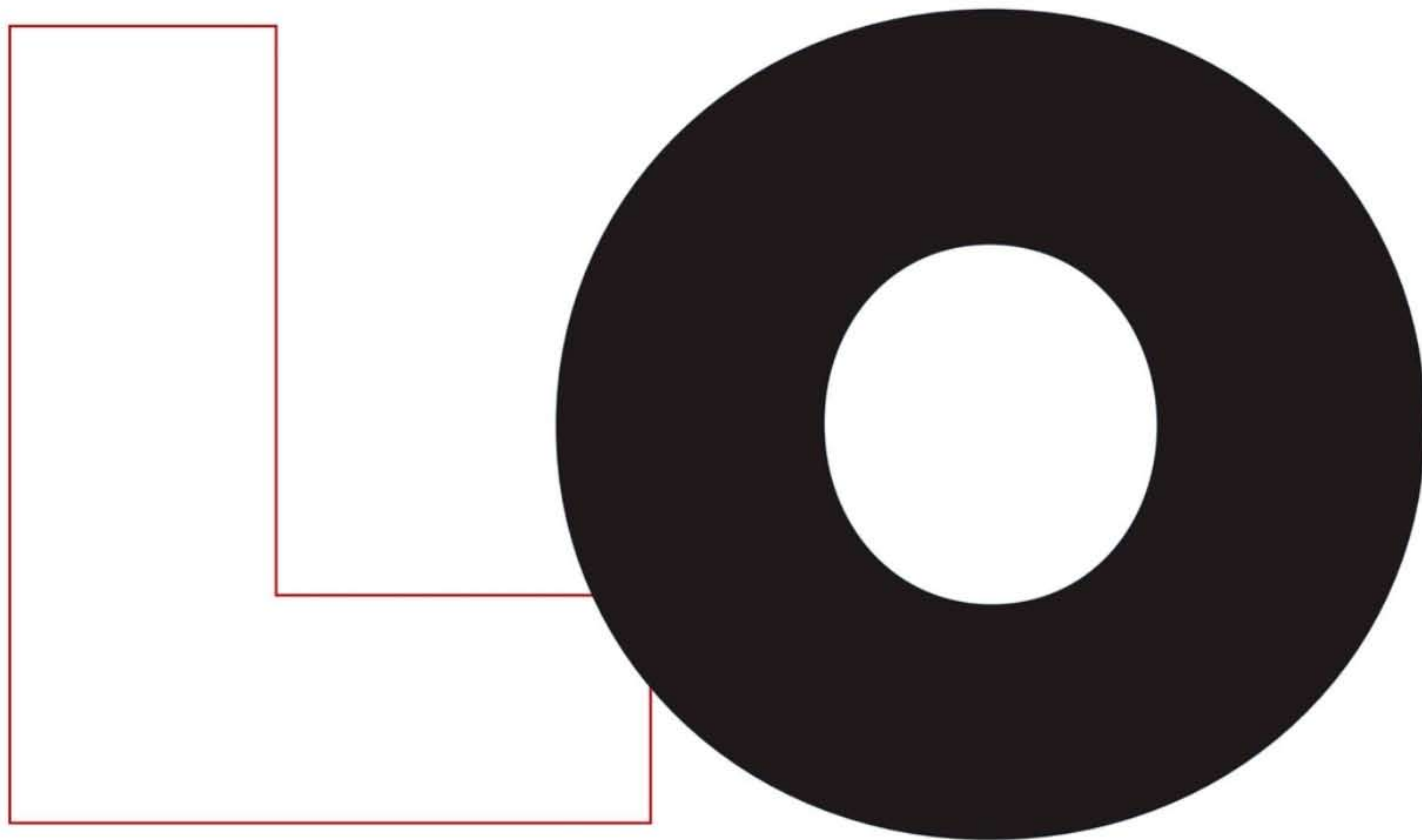


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AT LAST ■





NATHAN EAST FINDS HIS WAY HOME

BY CHRIS JISI
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN ABBOTT

AS A SIDEMAN FOR OVER 30 YEARS, there's nothing Nathan East hasn't done. Seminal recordings with Lionel Richie, Kenny Loggins, Whitney Houston, Eric Clapton, Michael Jackson, Chaka Kahn, Phil Collins, Elton John, Stevie Wonder, Anita Baker, Quincy Jones, David Foster, and Daft Punk, as L.A.'s first-call bassman? Check. Performing and touring across six continents with artists like George Harrison, Sting, Herbie Hancock, and Toto? Done. Co-writing a No. 1 hit—"Easy Lover," with Collins and Philip Bailey? Yessir. And you can toss in his 24-year-slot as one-fourth of the jazz supergroup Fourplay. But the one role that had eluded East until now—the man has been *busy*—is solo artist. That has changed with the striking debut *Nathan East*. It's the realization of all the ultra-musical, ear-grabbing moments we've become accustomed to when a project bears Nathan's name: a deep-pocketed melodic subhook or bop-inflected fill here, a soulful falsetto vocal or tasteful, non-root reharmonization there. As one might expect, Nate's 13-track blend of originals and covers of classic rock, R&B, jazz, and Americana draws some major-player contributions from Wonder, Clapton, Michael McDonald, Sara Bareilles, Bob James, and Chuck Loeb. Add in the continuity of a "house" rhythm section, and *Nathan East* is a swirl of energy, enthusiasm, surprising twists, and slammin' performances.

By now, East's westbound tale is a familiar one. Born in Philadelphia on December 8, 1955, he moved with his family to San Diego at age three for his dad's aviation job. Although he played cello in junior high, it was seeing a Fender Jazz Bass in his older brother's high school jazz band that caught his ear. A hands-on encounter with a Gibson EB-3 at church confirmed it. "I knew instantly this was what I wanted to do with my life," he recalls. Equipped with a Jazz Bass of his own, the 14-year-old feasted on records by James Brown, Motown, the Beatles, Hendrix, Sly Stone, and horn bands like Chicago, Blood, Sweat & Tears, and Tower Of Power, and the bass lines of James Jamerson, Chuck Rainey, Verdine White, Rocco Prestia, Stanley Clarke, and Jaco. Nathan's first break came at 16 when Barry White hired the cover band Nathan anchored for a national tour. Returning home, he earned a music degree at the University of California at San Diego and was about to start his Masters, when school mentor/bassist Bertram Turetzky advised him to head to L.A. to pursue his career.

Arriving in the fall of 1979, he got his chance on the second day of 1980, when renowned arranger Gene Page called him for his first big session. Thirty-four years later, East continues to fly high (literally—he's a licensed pilot). Still, his latest milestone hasn't come without pain: Just before Christmas came the shocking news that his close buddy, Ricky Lawson, who drummed on most of the CD, had a stroke and passed away at 59. Gathering himself over the holidays, Nathan made a showstopping appearance on the Grammys, performing "Get Lucky" with Daft Punk, featuring Wonder, Pharrell Williams, and Nile Rodgers, which is about when we caught up with him to get the Eastside story on his new CD.

You've long talked about a solo project. What made it finally happen?

My friend Chris Gero formed Yamaha Entertainment Group in Nashville, and he asked me to be one of the first artists on the label. Having been with Yamaha for over 30 years, it made perfect sense. We decided to co-produce it ourselves, and Chris and I began putting ideas for songs together. Last July we assembled a rhythm section and recorded 26 songs at Ocean Way Studios in L.A. We decided to call it *Nathan East*, so the title wouldn't dictate what kind of CD it is. An interesting aside: The Japanese *kanji* character in-between my name on the cover is the symbol for east.

What was your concept for the disc?

I wanted it to be a celebration of the music I've been involved with and have loved playing with friends over the years, which encompasses everything from jazz to R&B to rock. It was important for me to record the CD live in the studio, with my core six-piece rhythm section, to have a band sound and to encourage all the spontaneous creation that takes place on the studio floor. I didn't want it to be piecemeal, sending a hard drive around and having people add parts in their spare time. I wanted it to feel like a real, live studio album. I also did it that way to get a feel for how the songs would translate to a live performance situation. Finally, the opportunity to nurture my own solo career has arrived!

You open with a cover of your 1991 Fourplay tune "101 Eastbound," that has a simpler, deeper-grooving bass line and a Brazilian flavor.

Over the years, live, I've done a Brazilian-style intro to the tune using comping chords in a style that my dear friend Abraham Laboriel showed me way back when. At a U.K. show, a friend of mine heard it and suggested I record a version with the Brazilian feel. So I had that in mind when I went into the studio; then Michael Thompson started playing his "Sun Goddess"/Earth, Wind & Fire-like rhythm guitar part, and Ricky [Lawson] came up with the funkier groove, giving the song another new direction. I thought, well, I'm not going to outslap myself on the original; let me see if I can get the groove a little deeper. I used my 5-string for both the groove and the comping.

What led you to cover "Sir Duke," and how did come up with the arrangement?

Last summer I was in a Norway seaside village with Toto, and when we got back to the hotel from the gig, there was an 18-piece big band playing a wedding in one of the ballrooms. Simon Phillips and I stuck our heads in, and as soon as the bass player saw me, he took off his bass and handed it to me. They broke into "Sir Duke," and the dance floor was packed. I'm thinking, we're 6,000 miles from home, and everybody is dancing and smiling. This is a universal, feel-good song; I've got to record it. In the studio, I wanted to do it a little differently—something Stevie would dig—so I thought, What if we went to another key in the middle of the riff hook? Literally, where my finger fell is where we went. Jeff Babko played those "Birdland"-like reharmonizations in the intro, and I

said, "Please, write those out!" I used my 5-string for the groove and another 5-string tuned with a high C string for the melody. Bryan Lenox, our engineer in Nashville recorded direct to 2" tape, in addition to Pro Tools, which gave the bass an aggressive sound. I was able to get that Nate Watts growl, which led me to quote a bit of "Do I Do," too.

Stevie himself joins you on harmonica to play the melody and solo on "Overjoyed."

That came out of a late-'90s Rainforest benefit concert soundcheck at Carnegie Hall, with Sting, James Taylor, Bonnie Raitt, and Elton John. There was a break onstage and everyone was sitting around, so I begin messing with some chords, and I realized, Oh, that's "Overjoyed." I started to play it chord-melody-style, and suddenly I heard the melody on harmonica; I looked up and it was Stevie! Now I was on the spot, literally working out the changes as I went along, with all of these stars watching us. We got through the whole tune, including the modulation,

and everyone broke into spontaneous applause! And Stevie said to me, "Nate, if you ever record that, let me know and I'll play on it." So, all these years later, I held him to it. My brother Marcel and I put together a version with just me and Greg Phillinganes and Paulinho da Costa, and I took it over to Stevie's studio after recording some songs there for his *A Time to Love* CD, and I asked if he'd give it a go. He pulled out his harmonica, and that's what you hear—a 4 AM first take from Stevie!

You pay homage to Pat Metheny covering his "Letter from Home," for which you get an interesting bass sound.

What can you say about Pat? He has it all: his playing, his composing, his tone, his honesty and integrity. Pat is an icon and one of the best role models for anyone aspiring to be an artist. His music has been a big part of the soundtrack of my life, and he's a good friend. He offered to write a song for the project but we ran out of time; he was

i INFO

LISTEN



Nathan East, *Nathan East* [Yamaha Entertainment Group, 2014]; Daft Punk, *Random Access Memories* [Columbia, 2013]; Fourplay, *Esprit de Four* [Heads Up, 2012]; *Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues* soundtrack [Universal, 2013]; Andrea Bocelli, *Passione*, [Universal, 2013]

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Effects TC Electronic Ditto Looper, Flashback Delay, and Corona Chorus; MXR M87 Bass Compressor
Other TC Electronic PolyTune Mini, J-Phonic Super Ear Monitors
Recording *Nathan East* Radial Firefly Tube Direct Box, miked TC rig for some tracks

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very complimentary after hearing the CD, though. Chris Gero suggested doing “Letter” because we had the Nashville Recording Orchestra for the sessions. I took the outro and also used it as the intro, and for the melody I thought about how to make it my own. I ended up using my 6-string, with the C string tuned a 3rd higher, and went for a misterioso sound somewhere between

a bass and a guitar.

Your Fourplay bandmates Chuck Loeb and Bob James each contribute a tune in “Sevenate” and “Moodswing.”

Chuck and I discovered we came into the world within hours and miles of each other on December 7 and 8, him in New York and me in Philly. So he said, “I’m going to write a tune for you in

7/8." He sent a demo and then came out and played it with us, which put it over the top. Chuck told Bob about it, who said he wanted to give me something, too. He'd written "Moodswing" in 2009 and hadn't found a home for it; it's now a duet, with Bob and me in a Bill Evans and Scott LaFaro or Eddie Gomez vibe. I played my Yamaha Silent Bass. Chris Gero heard what we did and felt it would sound great with a string quartet. We called Bob, who was on tour in Europe with David Sanborn, and on the bus between cities he wrote a string quartet arrangement. When Fourplay played the Blue Note in New York right before Christmas, Bob and I debuted the song, and Ron Carter happened to be in the audience. Fortunately, I had stayed up until 4 AM the night before practicing my part because we premiering for Sirius XM Radio the same day.

"Moondance" unfolds in a dramatic way.

I used to sing that song in my first band, when I was 14. It came on the radio on my way to the studio, so we decided to cut it. Michael McDonald had already said he was in for the CD, and I thought he would be an unexpected choice to sing it. Chris

Gero had a vision: me starting the song by myself with a walking bass line, then Michael starts singing, then the big band comes in and hits you over the head for the second verse—but with more of a rock shuffle than a swing groove. We called Tom Scott for the arrangement and he nailed it, down to the stride bass lines doubled by Andrew Synoweic on guitar, and we have Greg Phillinganes on piano and Vinnie Colaiuta pounding out the drums. I was going to play my Silent Bass, but we felt electric bass would keep it in more of a rock vein. I used my 5-string and muted with both hands to get an upright sound.

Michael McDonald also wrote one of my favorite songs ever, "I Can Let Go Now," which I cover with Sara Bareilles singing. We used the original Marty Paich string arrangement for the orchestra, adapted by Lendell Black.

"Daft Funk" is an obvious allusion.

Michael Thompson, knowing I had played on the Daft Punk record, sent me a demo of this tune he'd started, and we finished it together. Ray Parker Jr. had been asking about being on the CD, so he came in and played that killer opening line. And Bryan, our Nashville engineer, recommended Bryan "Mr. Talkbox" Chambers, who is amazing and was a mentor of talkbox master Roger Troutman. I used my standard and my C string 5-strings, and I had the most fun playing the rhythm-guitar-like answer lines in the choruses.

"Can't Find My Way Home" was your vocal feature for years with Eric Clapton.

People have been advising me to record it for as long as I've been singing it. As I told Chris, it's been in arenas already, so that gives us a head start, knowing

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it works, live. We did it a bit brighter, and Ricky [Lawson] came up with a funky march-type beat. Chris had the idea to pause before the bridge. I incorporated some of the reharmings I do with Eric, and I added a few more; I wanted to be able to play it with just bass and voice, if need be. The cherry on top was flying to London and getting Eric on the track, last-minute!

Your son Noah appears on "Yesterday."

That was Chris' doing. He heard Noah playing it on piano at my studio and said, "That's going on the CD!" It's cool to do a session with your 13-year-old son; Noah's very talented and has perfect pitch, like his dad. We had a perfect pitch shootout one day with David Foster, and Noah annihilated both of us. I used my Silent Bass, and Chris had me sing the second verse.

The disc ends with two epic tracks in "Madiba" and your version of "America the Beautiful."

We said there would be no rules when we started putting the CD together, so that's how we ended up with the eight-minute "Madiba." It all started with Chris playing me the opening bass line on piano, and he had the song's first section; I added the bass and vocal singalong section, and we kept building on it until it became this sort of ode to Nelson Mandela. After my solo happens, Chris added the gothic operatic choir section, and then he gathered everyone in his office to be the "cheering crowd" in the outro singalong. The track has elements of Brazil, Portugal, South Africa, and gospel—we threw everything we had in there.

"America" satisfied a longstanding fantasy of mine, of sitting in front of an orchestra in a tux, playing an anthemic melody—and being in front of the

Nashville Recording Orchestra was indeed inspiring. Jaco's amazing version was the initial spark for me, and I wanted to take it to a whole other place that captured the patriotic sense and rolling beauty of the piece. Chris, Lendell, and I mapped out the modulations and the arrangement, and then late in the game I decided to add the choir.

Let's touch on the state of Fourplay, as the band approaches its 25th anniversary.

Adding Chuck Loeb has been a revelation. It feels like he's been in the band for 20 years—this lineup is definitely the way forward. Live, we've always stretched, but on CD we've come a long way from the days when the label would literally say things like, "Give us a one-riff hook, in one key, and no solos." Bob used to laugh, "Smooth jazz? I want to play rough jazz!" Now there are no more rules, so we get to have fun and high adventure. Another key for me was adding upright to the mix. I'd never jump into the ring with the Patituccis and Stanleys, but I feel like I have a voice there. Really, until now, Fourplay had been my solo project and writing outlet, so I'm happy to finally join the guys in having my own CD.

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**What can you reveal about the Daft Punk experience, specifically how your parts came about?**

Initially, I was called for a few days of tracking with [drummer] J.R. Robinson and [keyboardist] Chris Caswell. We did tunes, we did grooves, and then they called me back in by myself to record some ideas against a one-chord vamp, "Okay, great, what else you got?"—that kind of vibe. There was also a track where they asked me to play in-between what [bassist] James Genus had played, and he may have had the same experience with some of my tracks. I used my 5-string for everything.

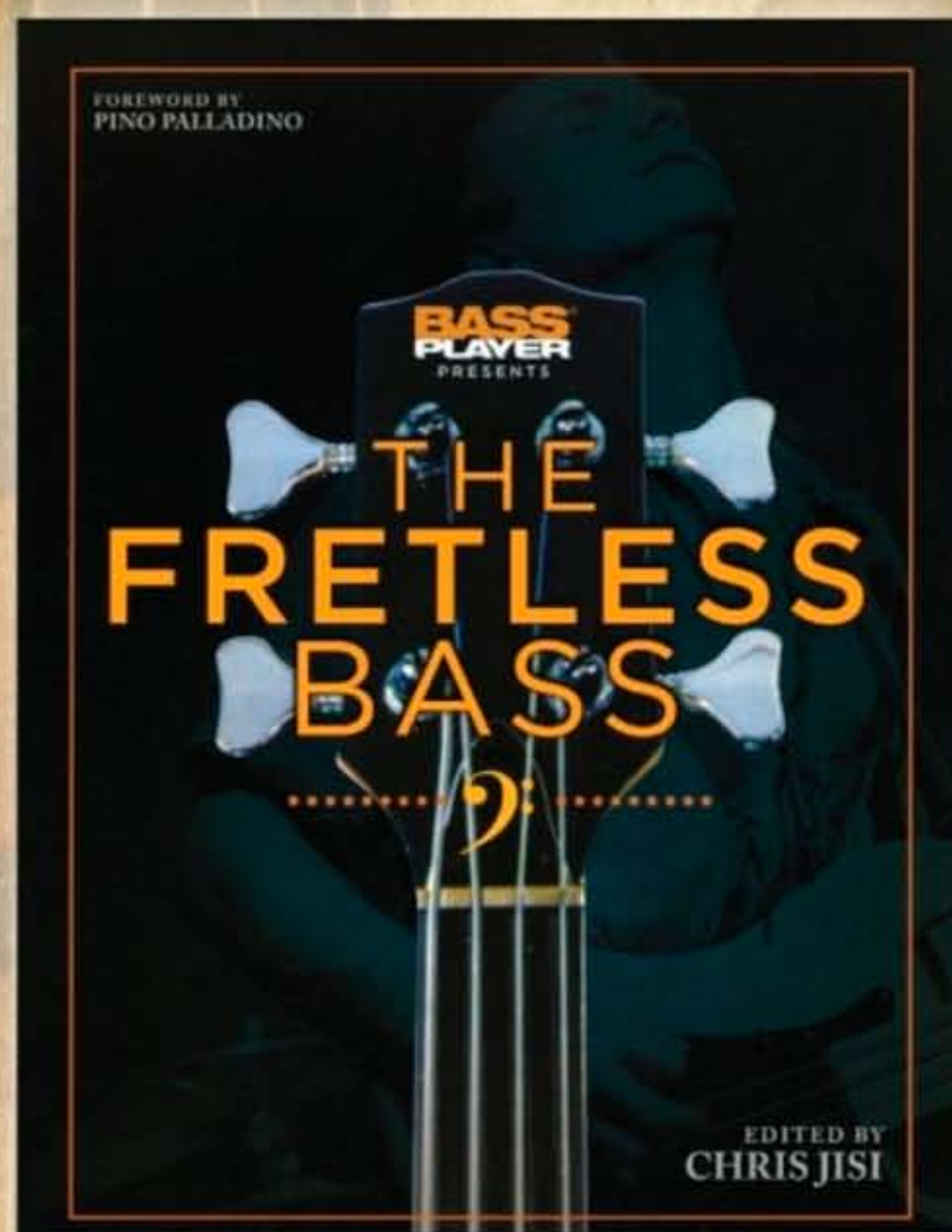
I did "Get Lucky" with J.R. and Chris, but then they took the track to New York and added Nile Rodgers and [drummer] Omar Hakim, which put a whole different kind of thing on it. Then they added [guitarist] Paul Jackson Jr. on it—Nile and Paul on the same track! I was brought back in to do the final bass part, which took on a new flavor, now that the funk was jumping from the speakers. I definitely channeled the late, great Bernard Edwards in trying to come up with the perfect part. I was in Europe with Toto when "Get Lucky" hit, and it was blasting out of every club, restaurant, car, and open apartment window. When I got home, Noah showed me that it was everywhere here, as well. It's probably the biggest radio hit I've played on, along with "Easy Lover," "Foot-loose," and "Change the World."

Nothing seems to stop you, even the downturn of the recording scene and the fickle music business.

I've been very blessed. I've never been afraid to leave town and be replaced on the session scene, and thanks in large part to the level of artists I've been

fortunate to work and tour with, people are willing to wait for me to get back in town to do their projects. I also have the ability to do sessions online from the road and send recorded tracks via the internet. There's no doubt, however, that the scene has drastically diminished and many studios have closed. I used to do 20 to 30 dates a week, four or five sessions every day—records, jingles, movie and TV dates—but the days of rippin' and runnin' are gone. Ironically, that has created time for my solo career and helped me get all the musicians I had on the CD. This year will be as hectic as ever; I start off with Eric Clapton in Japan, Singapore, and Dubai, and we've done some recording for a J.J. Cale tribute album. I've been in with Toto working on material for their new studio album, and we have spring dates in Japan, with Keith Carlock replacing Simon on drums. And Fourplay will record a new studio CD this summer and tour the U.S. and Japan. But the best news is I'll be doing shows in support of my CD. It's tremendously exciting to finally be an artist! **BP**

See Lesson, next page



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ON HIS SELF-TITLED DEBUT, Nathan East's bass can be found in front of a symphony orchestra, behind Stevie Wonder's harmonica and Eric Clapton's Strat, beneath Michael McDonald's vocal, and soaring in guitar range above a Pat Metheny composition. Here are more examples of his ace bass placement.

EX. 1A

Medium R&B
♩ = 110

F7#11 E7#9#13 C#m B/D# Fm7b5 E7/Bb C G/B Am11 F#7sus

EX. 1B

Medium R&B
Swung 16ths
♩ = 110

B Fm7 E B/D#

EX. 2

Medium swing
Swung eighths
♩ = 156

Cmaj7 Am F#7(#5#9) F9(13) E7aug E/G# Am Am(maj7)

Am7 D9(13) Ebm7 Ab7 F/G G7aug Gbmaj7b5 Eb7b9

Examples 1a and 1b are in the style of Nathan's cover of Wonder's "Sir Duke." Example 1a shows keyboardist Jeff Babko's reharmon behind the main riff, at :09. Laughs Jeff, "Nate said, 'Can you do one of your cool reharm's? We're tracking in five minutes!' His trust and encouragement always pushes me to stretch and discover." Example 1b has the last four bars of Nate's solo over the chorus, at 2:11. Of his bebop and blues navigation, East says, "My main influences as a soloist are guitarists like George Benson, Pat Martino, and Pat Metheny. Music is just paying homage to your heroes."

Example 2 is from the 3:49 mark of "Moodswing," Nathan's duet with Bob James, where he plays the second eight bars of the A-section melody on his upright Silent Bass. "I interpreted Bob's written melody a bit differently, but

he dug it. His pieces are the definition of soulful sophistication; we've done three tracks in this format [one can be heard on the video of Nathan's 2013 *BASS PLAYER LIVE! clinic*], and we're romancing the idea of doing a duet CD and tour."

Examples 3a, 3b, and 3c are from Nathan's eight-minute, anthemic "Madiba." Example 3a contains the opening groove, at :14. Example 3b is the breakdown at 2:29 that sets up the song's second section, showing Nate's (separately recorded) band-unison top line (stems up) and bass line (stems down), both played on his 5-string. Finally, Ex. 3c occurs at 2:59, toward the end of Nathan's singalong section. After singing and playing the melody in the first three measures, he scats through some cool II-V's to set up his forthcoming solo.

EX. 3A

Bright funk
samba
♩ = 132

Dm9

EX. 3B

Bright funk
samba
♩ = 132

F Gm7 B♭ B♭/C F Gm7 B♭ B♭/C

EX. 3C

Bright funk
samba
♩ = 132

F F/A B♭ F F/A B♭ Am7 D7 Gm7 C7 Am7 D7 Gm7 B♭/D Cm7 Fm7 B♭7 D♭/E♭

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Hartke unveiled a set of affordable bass combos that all feature master volume, 3-band EQ, $\frac{1}{8}$ " stereo aux input, and $\frac{1}{4}$ " headphone output. The new line includes the 25-watt 1x8 HD25, the 50-watt 1x10 HD50, the 75-watt 1x12 HD75, and the 150-watt 1x15 HD150. The HD75 and HD150 both sport tweeters and 7-band graphic EQs.

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Contact hartke.com



CORT GUITARS

RITHMIC Jeff Berlin Signature Bass

Bass firebrand Jeff Berlin has hooked up with Cort Guitars to birth the new RITHMIC signature bass, a 4-string bolt-on with an alder body and spalted maple/padouk top, maple neck, and rosewood fingerboard. The RITHMIC comes loaded with custom Bartolini soapbar pickups, a Babicz FCH4 bridge, Hipshot Ultra-light tuners, and heavy DR Strings DDT strings. Three knobs control volume, blend, and passive tone. Metronome sold separately.

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- (B100MKII)

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- 200 Watts @ 4 ohms
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 - 2 x 10" custom speakers plus switchable horn
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- (B450MKII)

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**WARWICK****LW Speaker Cabinets**

Warwick's new series of speakers, available in 2x8, 4x8, 1x12, and 1x15 configurations, come with either Celestion (CE) or Warwick speakers; the Celestions come solo, while the Warwick speakers come with tweeters. Warwick's 200-watt CA 208 LW and 300-watt CA 208 LW CE cabs are both 2x8's, but at 39 lbs., the LW is 3 lbs. heavier. The 400-watt CA 408 LW is 48.5 lbs., just like its brother, the 600-watt CA 408 LW CE, while the 500-watt CA 112 LW CE weighs in at just a pound more than its 300-watt brother, the CA 112 LW. Finally, the 500-watt CA 115 LW CE is a couple pounds lighter than its 300-watt CA 115 LW brother.

Street N/A

Contact warwick.de

**CA 208 LW****CA 408 LW****CA 112 LW****CA 115 LW****FENDER****2014 Custom Shop Basses**

Fender added a little spice to its custom shop offerings with its Pro Precision and Time Machine 1964 Heavy Relic Precision basses. The new Pro Precision, available in arctic white, black, and faded three-color sunburst, has a hand-selected alder body and a one-piece quartersawn hard rock maple neck with a smooth satin finish. Other features include a 7.25"-radius fingerboard with 20 medium jumbo frets, custom TV Jones Thunderblade pickup, high-mass RSD bass bridge, and vintage-style tuners. The Fender Custom Shop celebrates the 50th anniversary of 1964—which saw the Precision Bass provide the foundation groove on so many great Motown, Stax, surf and other cool records—by recreating the '64 Precision with a heavy-relic, three-color sunburst P with the collectible "L Series" neck plate.

Street Proto Precision Bass, \$4,300; Time Machine 1964 Heavy Relic Precision, \$4,600

Contact fendercustomshop.com

**IBANEZ****BTB686SC**

This stunning new 35"-scale single-cut 6-string from Ibanez features neck-through construction with ash body wings, a rosewood top, and a 5-piece maple/bubinga neck. Passive Bartolini BH1-6 pickups and a 3-band EBQ-III EQ with a 2-way mid-frequency selector switch round out the electronics.

Street N/A

Contact ibanez.com

**1964 Heavy Relic Precision****Proto Precision**

DINGWALL GUITARS

Afterburner HS, Combustion, NG-2, Super J & Super PJ

Fanned-fret aficionado Sheldon Dingwall unveiled his lineup of basses for 2014: the bubinga-bodied Afterburner HS; a Combustion bass loaded with a 3-band EMG preamp and FD3n neodymium pickups; the NG-2 Adam "Nolly" Getgood signature, an alder-bodied affair designed in collaboration with the Periphery bassist featuring a 3-band Darkglass Engineering preamp and custom-gauge Circle K strings; the new thinline Super J featuring 3-band Glockenklang preamps; and new Super PJ basses.

Street N/A

Contact dingwallguitars.com



ASHDOWN ENGINEERING

PiBass-240

Looking for a portable, versatile bass head with a headphone out? Designed in partnership with Polish bass phenom Wojtek Pilichowski, Ashdown's 240-watt PiBass-240 may be just what the chiropractor ordered. Sporting an active/passive input select, a 4-band semi-parametric equalizer with an EQ in/out switch, master volume, headphone out and a DI output with a ground lift, the 7.7-pound PiBass is an ideal combination for gigging players looking to lighten the load without compromising their sound.

Street \$400

Contact ashdownmusic.com

PHIL JONES

Bass Cub

Phil Jones, renowned for his ridiculously portable yet hi-fi Briefcase, upped the ante (and dropped the weight) with the Bass Cub, which puts out 100 watts in a 13-pound, two-channel combo that includes a 3-band EQ, a limiter, aux and mic inputs, as well as headphone, DI, and preamp outs.

Street \$650

Contact philjonesbass.com



Afterburner HS

Combustion

NG-2

Super PJ

Super PJ

Super J

Super J



TRBX504

TRBX304

YAMAHA TRBX Basses

Yamaha launched its new TRBX basses, which feature mahogany bodies and 5-piece maple/mahogany necks. Available in 4- and 5-string, 300-series TRBX basses feature M5 humbuckers and 5-way Performance EQ switches—which offer preset EQ curves with Slap, Pick, Flat, Finger, and Solo settings in addition to two bands of active EQ—while 500-series TRBX basses feature H5 dual-coil pickups, three bands of active EQ, and an active/passive switch.

List TRBX304, \$550; TRBX305, \$620; TRBX504, \$790, TRBX505, \$860

Contact yamaha.com

XOTIC XPJ-1T Chuck Rainey Signature Bass

Rock-steady studio stalwart Chuck Rainey worked with Xotic to create the XPJ-1T, a bolt-on 4-string with an ash body, Hipshot hardware, Xotic P/J pickups, and active/passive electronics featuring Mid-Boost and Bright switches.

Street \$4,000

Contact xotic.us/guitars



FENDER Rumble Combos & Heads

Fender unleashed a bevy of Rumble combos and heads that had been redesigned to be lighter and louder. Each combo or head, named for its power rating, features a foot-switchable overdrive circuit, three-button voicing palette, Eminence drivers, and premium HF compression tweeters. The 410 4x10 can handle 1,000 watts, and the Rumble 115 1x15 can put out 600 watts.

List Rumble 500 combo, \$500; Rumble 500 head, \$400; Rumble 200 combo, \$400; Rumble 200 head, \$300; Rumble 100, \$300; Rumble 40, \$180; Rumble 25, \$100; Rumble 15, \$75; Rumble 410, \$300; Rumble 115, \$300

Contact fender.com



Rumble 200



Rumble 500



Rumble 15



Rumble 40



Rumble 100



Rumble 115

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Aerosmith	Chris Cornell	Frank Gambale	John Jorgensen	Macy Gray	The Prodigy	Steve Miller
Alice Cooper	The Chieftains	Franz Ferdinand	John Mayer	Manhattan Transfer	Queensrÿche	Steve Morse
Alicia Keys	Chuck Leavell	Garbage	John Patitucci	Manowar	Radiohead	Steve Stevens
Alison Krauss	Chuck Rainey	Gavin DeGraw	John Petrucci	Marcus Miller	Randy Bachman	Steve Vai
Alter Bridge	Cyndi Lauper	Genesis	John Rzeznik	Mariah Carey	Randy Travis	Steve Winwood
America	Cirque Du Soleil	Gino Vanelli	Johnny A	Marillion	Rascal Flatts	The Stills
American Idol	Clint Black	Godsmack	Johnny Hallyday	Marilyn Manson	Ravi Shankar	Sting
Anberlin	Coldplay	Gomez	Joni Mitchell	Mark Egan	Razorlight	Stone Temple Pilots
Ani DiFranco	Colin James	Goo Goo Dolls	Josh Groban	Mark Knopfler	R H Chili Peppers	Styx
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Avril Lavigne	Dandy Warhols	The Guess Who	Kaiser Chiefs	Megadeth	Robert Randolph	Timbaland
Backstreet Boys	Daniel Lanois	Guns & Roses	Kanye West	Melissa Etheridge	Rod Stewart	Tom Waits
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Bob Dylan	Dream Theater	Jet	LeAnn Rimes	Peter Dinklage	Snow Patrol	Xavier Rudd
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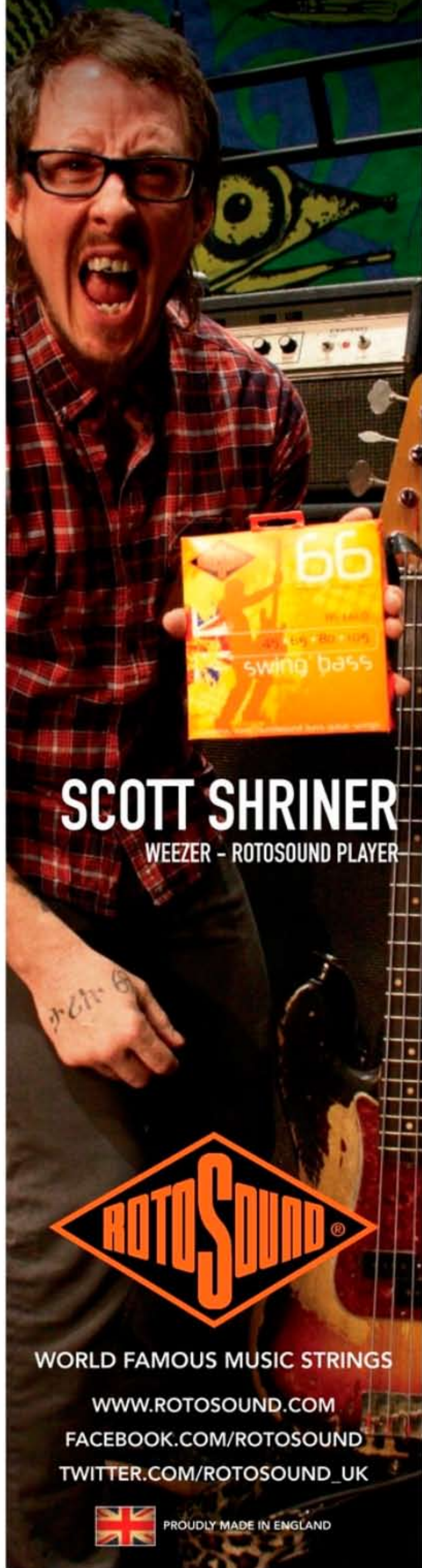
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TRAYNOR SB200H & SB500H

Traynor threw down a pair of lightweight Small Block heads, the 200-watt SB200H, and the 500-watt SB500H. Weighing under 1.5 lbs, the SB200H features an all-metal chassis, 4-band EQ, XLR DI, and effects loop, while the SB500H packs 500 watts of punch in the similarly small package.

List SB200H, \$350; SB500H, \$550

Contact traynoramps.com

WARWICK

RockBass Bootsy Collins Space Bass

If that scary price tag had dashed your hopes of owning a Warwick Custom Shop Bootsy Bass, take a look at the new RockBass Artist Line Bootsy Collins Space Bass, which flaunts a mahogany body, a maple neck, a rosewood fingerboard, active MEC TJ/J pickups and active MEC electronics.

Street N/A

Contact warwick.de





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SOUNDRoom

Tech 21 VT Bass DI

BY ED FRIEDLAND

SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 1989, TECH 21 HAS cultivated a very healthy selection of bass-specific products. Its celebrated SansAmp Bass Driver DI has long been a gig bag staple for touring and recording players, but its newest addition, the VT Bass DI, is poised to become the next must-have bass multi-tool.

Built around Tech 21's proprietary SansAmp technology, the VTDI is the latest offering in the VT series, which includes the VT Bass, VT Bass Deluxe, and the new VT Bass Rack. If the graphics and name aren't enough of a hint: the VT Bass series is intended to emulate the tonal and performance characteristics of classic Ampeg rigs—namely, the SVT and B-15—along with a wide range of other tones. Is it possible to make a pedal sound exactly like a searing, 300-watt, tube-fired, lead-sled pushing an 8x10 fridge/cab? No, but you can get damn close. The original VT pedal has seen refinements over the years, but at the core is a well-designed set of tools that behave very much like the amps they are modeled after. However, this is not digital modeling—the VTDI is completely analog, and many feel this gives the effect warmth and realism, and removes the risk of digital latency.

The VTDI takes the VT concept to the logical next level with the addition of the DI, and some tweaking to the circuit has been done to capitalize on this feature. The XLR output's -20dB pad makes it easier to match varying level requirements such as driving a power amp, or going direct to a mixing console, and the ground lift and phantom power capabilities are useful connectivity tools. The ¼" out has a +10dB boost which allows you to bypass your amp's preamp and drive the power amp via the effect return, or drive a separate power amp. There is a parallel out that sends an un-effected, balanced signal to your amp or another source. The BITE switch is a new feature that helps the pedal blend in different applications. When engaged, BITE adds a presence boost and a subsonic filter. The presence is useful when going into a power amp with no additional EQ, and adds definition to more driven tones, but if used in front

of your preamp, care must be taken with the amp EQ to avoid harshness. Turning off the BITE also disengages the subsonic filter, which makes the low end flab out a bit—a trait that can come in handy at times, but I vote for separating the two functions for maximum flexibility.

The Speaker simulation does a good job mimicking the high frequency rolloff of a tweeter-less multi-10" speaker cab, and adds realism to the DI output. Disengaging the SPEAKER SIM brightens the tone considerably, which might be helpful if you're running through a tweeter-less cab of your own. The LEVEL control changes the output of both the ¼" and XLR outputs, and by rolling the Blend knob fully counter-clockwise, the VTDI functions great as a "straight" preamp (sans the SansAmp effect) with its powerful 3-band EQ. But the BLEND control (a feature wisely ported over from the Bass Driver DI) gives this pedal an edge for live work by allowing you to mix the SansAmp effect with the straight (post-EQ) sound of your bass. The BLEND interacts with the other controls, so it's worth experimenting with different ratios—with highly saturated settings, the SansAmp circuit's inherent compression can obscure your attack if run at full BLEND.

The CHARACTER knob is essentially a midrange control that sweeps through Ampeg-land, while also effecting the attack and drive response. At fully counter-clockwise, the mid scoop is very SVT-like, and rotating clockwise adds more midrange content. Set at 12 o'clock, the pedal is said to emulate the B-15 fliptop—the tone does transform at that point in the rotation, and yeah, it's pretty darn close. As you roll above 12 o'clock with the CHARACTER knob, the pedal develops a gnarly growl that maxes into a dUg Pinnick-like snarl. The DRIVE function adds gain, girth, and eventually total meltdown, but settings in the 9–11 o'clock range can fatten up a clean sound with lots of rich, harmonic content.

Taking the VTDI out for a spin on some Americana gigs, my best results happened plugging my bass straight into the pedal and running it into my amps effect return, bypassing the preamp



and EQ sections. Engaging the +10dB boost on the 1/4" output gave me all the gain I needed to drive the 900-watt Class D power amp. I ran direct to the house PA from the XLR output, and kept the BLEND control at noon. Playing my G&L L-2500 in passive/series mode, mostly on the neck pickup, I dialed in what sounded to me like a classic Ampeg clean tone with the CHARACTER control between 11 and 12 o'clock, a touch of BASS and TREBLE, the BITE off, SPEAKER SIM on, and DRIVE at 9 o'clock. On a pickstyle tune, I rolled the DRIVE up to 11 o'clock (not to be confused with "11") and fortified the tone with some gristle. There was no doubt my amp sounded different than usual, but the dynamic response was still there, I could still feel the connection between my fingers and the attack—something I cannot claim to have experienced with digital models in live settings. Having gigged with the first version of the VT pedal, I can say the addition of the BLEND control, and the DI are the features that really make this pedal useful for live work.

In the studio, I ran the VT DI off the phantom power, and listened closely to the subtleties of the box. Coming through studio monitors, I liked running the BLEND up at higher settings; the native

compression of the SansAmp can be an advantage here, particularly in overdrive settings. With a Carvin PB5 in passive mode, I engaged the BITE switch and got clarity and definition, but switching the bass to active mode, I found it to be a little too bright, even with the BASS set flat. Turning off the BITE created some looseness in the low end, so I engaged the BITE function to regain the tightening effect of the subsonic filter, and rolled the HIGH control completely off, which still left me with enough high end to avoid mud. As I got more familiar with the controls, I found it simple to dial in a wide range of textures, and tailor them to a variety of instruments.

While it takes a little time to learn the VT DI's ecosystem, the powerful control it offers make this little guy worthy of being the front end of your gig rig—just add as much power as you can afford, and you're ready to rock. Or, you could treat it like a stompbox and use it in your pedal board (the pedal works best at the front of the effect chain.) But it's equally at home in the studio as an amp emulator, or a straight-forward preamp. Will it replace the mighty Ampeg in the hall of great tones? No, but the last time I checked, an Ampeg SVT will not fit in my gig bag, and this thing is damn close. **BP**

S SPECIFICATIONS

TECH 21

VT BASS DI

Street \$209

Pros Powerful tone shaping, top-notch amp emulation

Cons Separate the presence boost from the subsonic filter for more control.

Bottom Line The VT DI is the next best thing to the real thing, and in some cases (like a second floor load in), maybe better.

Contact tech21nyc.com

SPECS

Output 1/4" parallel, 1/4" out w/ +10dB boost, XLR w/ ground lift, -20dB DI pad

Controls LEVEL, BLEND, LOW (312dB @ 125Hz), MID (312dB @ 500Hz), HIGH (312dB @ 3.2kHz), CHARACTER, DRIVE, BITE, SPEAKER SIMULATION

Power 9-volt, optional power supply, phantom

Dimensions 4.5" x 3.5" x 1.25"

Made in U.S.A.



MXR Bass Innovations M81 Bass Preamp

IN RECENT YEARS, THE MXR BASS INNOVATIONS DIVISION AT DUNLOP HAS BEEN steadily pumping out a powerful posse of pedals, from the flashy and freaky Bass Envelope Filter and Bass Fuzz Deluxe to the more subtle and sophisticated Bass Compressor and Bass Chorus Deluxe. An older pedal in the line, the popular Bass DI+, has earned a good number of devoted players needing a reliable DI with built-in distortion. By ditching the distortion component—which the company offers in an array of stand-alone fuzz and overdrive stompboxes—MXR has taken the core features of that pedal, including three bands of EQ and a clean DI, and packed them into the compact footprint of its other bass effects.

Those of us who have earned our grey hairs playing the bar and club circuit have all had it happen: You take great care to ensure that your sound is just right, from the strings on your bass to the quality of your patch cables. You lug your rig to the gig, only to be instructed to plug into a house DI that's more scuffed than a Whitey Ford slider and as beer-drenched as a frat-house porch. By bringing your own DI, you maintain control of your signal path to the last possible moment, before handing it all over to the FOH engineer.

A clean, rugged, reliable DI is well worth the extra pound in your gig bag and the real estate on your pedal board; what makes MXR's Bass Preamp so appealing is that in addition to being a studio-quality DI, it's also a powerful 3-band preamp. Plugging a flatwound-strung Precision Bass into the Bass Pre, the M81 proves itself to be an excellent tone companion; the three bands of EQ are voiced in sweet spots that keep the bass from becoming too boomy, the treble from sounding too harsh. The most powerful control on the M81 is definitely its sweep-able midrange, which centers the boost/cut anywhere from 250Hz to 1kHz, and provides a dizzying array of grunt, burp, bark, honk, and everything in between.

On its surface, there's nothing flashy or gimmicky about the M81 Bass Preamp—no swirling flange or buzz-saw fuzz here. But by pairing a high-grade DI with a deceptively flexible 3-band EQ, MXR has produced one of its most exciting pedals yet, one that's a worthy addition to any working bass player's setup. **BP**

BYPASS BASICS

The various merits of buffered or true-bypass switching are often debated among pedal users (Dunlop has a helpful blog explaining of the differences at jimdunlop.com). One cool feature of the M81 is that it's capable of a few switching options. In its default mode, the DIRECT OUT is enabled and the ¼" OUT is buffered. Those wanting to use the pedal in true bypass mode can do so by disengaging the DIRECT OUT and buffer by throwing two switches housed inside the pedal. That renders the DI portion of the pedal useless, but it allows the preamp itself to be operated with true-bypass switching.

SPECIFICATIONS

Street \$170

Pros Pro-quality D.I., powerful EQ with sweep-able midrange, small footprint

Cons None

Bottom Line While some stompboxes aim for flash and flair, the M81 aims to give players maximum control of the character and quality of their bass signal.

Contact jimdunlop.com

Input impedance 2.2MΩ

Outputs ¼", balanced XLR

Switching Buffered; true bypass (preamp only)

Power 9V battery, DC adapter, or phantom power

Controls INPUT (310 dB), OUTPUT (+20dB, -50dB), BASS (318dB @ 40Hz), MID (317dB, 250Hz-1kHz), TREBLE (318dB @ 4kHz), PRE/POST EQ switch (for DI)

Made In U.S.A.

MXR

SPECS

the PRS. Grainger Bass

In 2003 Gary Grainger sat down with our engineers and helped us create the genesis of the Grainger Bass. Originally available only through Private Stock, the Grainger 4 and Grainger 5 are now available from our core line in an elegant and simplified configuration. This instrument has become the go-to bass for many of today's top musicians. Because of the extraordinary woodwork, hardware and proprietary pre-amp, these basses have all the tone, clarity, power and feel a player needs.



Gary Grainger

Kevin Walker

Rhonda Smith

Wyzard

Alex AI

Paul Smith®

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HERITAGE AUCTIONS HA.com

A wide banner featuring logos of various musical instrument brands, including guitars, amplifiers, and effects pedals. The logos are arranged in two rows. The top row includes: VINTAGE GUITAR, Martin six string customs, Ibanez, Gibson Les Paul, Gibson Les Paul, BOSS, One's, SBAL, SFB, PRS, B2, and ZEN. The bottom row includes: YAMAHA, DODD, SANCHEZ, Taylor, SCHecter, FINE TAIL, VOX, 130 GREISCH, CATEGORY 5, Observer, Bigsby, GFL, SANCHEZ, and BASS KOP.

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SOUNDRoom



Carvin PB5

BY ED FRIEDLAND

DESPITE THE HEALTHY INNOVATION, development, and advancement we electric bassists have seen in the instrument-building world, in many players' minds, there are still two basic flavors to choose from: P and J. But while these two letters will forever be associated with the creations of Leo Fender, virtually every bass manufacturer in the world has its own version of the hallowed duo. Some are dead-on copies, while others look for ways to refine or personalize the design. Carvin enters the P-Bass race with its new PB5 and PB4 instruments. By offering a staggering number of factory options, Carvin may have created the most customizable P on the planet. But does it sound like a P?

Yes. At first plug-in, there is no doubt where this instrument's sonic palette is centered. Carvin's SPC split-coil Alnico V pickup sits right where it should to create the classic tone signature—just add an ash body (as reviewed) and a bolt-on maple neck, and you're on the road to P-town. As an interesting part of this review, I configured the instrument using Carvin's online ordering system, which made choosing from the many possibilities very manageable. I'm fairly traditional-minded about my P's, so I went with straightforward choices: ash body (lightweight requested), maple neck, P pickup only (P/J and P/HB options are also available). But

I also wanted to trick it out a little, considering the many options. About as radical as I got was an ebony fingerboard with abalone diamond inlays, Carvin's 18-volt active preamp, and a smoking-hot Radiation Green paint job with matching headstock, which earned this beast its nickname: Godzilla. The Carvin locking bridge (which gives you the option to string through the body) and the lightweight, 20:1-ratio enclosed-gear tuners complete the hardware package found on all Carvin bolt-on instruments. This particular bass received chrome hardware, though gold or black are available, and a three-ply black pickguard seemed complementary. The string spacing is essentially standard 4-string spacing, but with five strings—it makes the right-hand compartment feel familiar, but larger. This tapers down to a very comfy nut width, while the neck has a shallow "C" profile that feels sleek and fast. The 14" radius gives the fingerboard a more modern feel, and the 22 medium-jumbo frets were installed and finished perfectly. Selecting a light piece of swamp ash, Carvin delivered a 5-string under eight pounds.

Given that much of my workload is managed by one type of P-Bass or another, I was first interested to see how well the PB5 fit into my staple diet of Austin-fried country/rock gigs. While I



am biased toward passive P's, on an outdoor trio gig—sans sound reinforcement, with slide guitar and drums—it was mighty nice to have that EQ fattening up the low end (if only it weren't 40 degrees). On several indoor occasions, I went back and forth between passive and active modes, and found the passive tone to have the characteristic midrange bark that I rely on, but with a little more clarity on top. The blade magnet design of the SPC gives the pickup a more even response across the strings, and contributes to the modern side of the PB5's personality. Passive mode is accessed via the push/pull pot on the passive tone control, which acts as a traditional lowpass filter even when active mode is engaged. I found this helpful for dialing in a more traditional tone when in active mode. In addition to atomic low end, with a simple twist of the treble control I discovered that Godzilla can spray fire, as well. The highs are super sparkly, and the cutting power is something to be appreciated when you need it. For slap or aggressive pickstyle,

the treble boost brings the PB out of the shadows, but with the EQ cut and passive tone control, the highs can be removed completely when you need the type of bass tone that induces involuntary spasms.

I confirmed for myself that the PB5 would function like any of my other P's, but how would it work as a 5-string? Happily, the PB5 has a killer B string that receives ample coverage from the pickup, and has a tight, defined acoustic response that makes it very playable, even in the higher positions. There was a time when you had to go with a premium boutique build to get this kind of B string at 34" scale, but Carvin seems to have figured this one out a long time ago. The PB5 can produce a wide range of tones from the P-Bass spectrum—from thumpy Jamerson to grindy Entwistle, and it manages to "look right" without being a cookie-cutter copy. Carvin's overall fit and finish is top notch, and with the savings of dealing directly with the factory, you can step into a U.S.-built 5-string for under a grand. Pretty sweet. **BP**

S SPECIFICATIONS

CARVIN

PB5

Direct \$839 base, \$1,178 as reviewed

Pros Pure P tone, killer B

Cons None

Bottom Line With a myriad of wood choices and pickup configurations available, the PB5 can be almost any bass you want it to be, but its heart is precisely P.

Contact carvin.com

SPECS

Construction Bolt-on

Body Swamp ash

Neck Maple

Fingerboard Ebony

Fingerboard radius 14"

Frets 22 medium-jumbo

Bridge Carvin locking

String spacing at bridge .75" (19mm)

Tuning keys Carvin Premium 20:1

Neck width at nut 1.75"

Scale length 34"

Pickup Carvin SCP Alnico V

Preamp 18-volt, concentric bass/treble boost/cut

Controls Volume, passive tone (push/pull passive mode), bass, treble

Weight 7.8 lbs

Made in U.S.A.



WOODSHED



JAZZ CONCEPTS

The Real Deal: Wilbur Ware

BY JOHN GOLDSBY

FLYING FINGERS! PYROTECHNICS! SCARY SKILLS! BASS PLAYERS WITH flashy chops get noticed. They are often at the top of polls and on covers of magazines. But bass players with understated technique—the cats who lay down a groove, deliver a driving pulse, and light a creative spark—seem to show up on great recordings and gigs. These unsung masters are sometimes overlooked, but they should never be forgotten. Wilbur Ware is such a player: a hero to bassists who favor groove, swing, and attitude over slick licks.

Ware (September 8, 1923–September 9, 1979) grew up in Chicago, the son of a preacher who taught him the basics of music, first on banjo and later on bass. Ware attended DuSable High School, where he was mentored by Walter Dyett, a dedicated and remarkable music teacher. Due to Dyett's commitment to excellence and strict teaching methods, DuSable produced many students who went on to jazz fame, including bassists such as Fred Hopkins and NEA Jazz Master Richard Davis. Soon after high school, Ware made his name on the storied Chicago jazz scene, cutting his teeth with players like violinist Stuff Smith, trumpeter Roy Eldridge, and saxophonists Johnny Griffin, John Jenkins, and Sonny Stitt.

After moving to New York in the mid '50s, Ware performed and recorded with many top-shelf beboppers: Art Blakey, Blue Mitchell, Kenny Dorham, Thelonious Monk, and saxophonist Sonny Rollins. His live date with Rollins and drummer Elvin Jones is legendary [Sonny Rollins, *A Night at the Village Vanguard*, Blue Note, 1957]. This chord-less trio with no piano or guitar leaves plenty of space for the bass. Jones' rolling, roiling drum pulse spurs Rollins to incredible improvisatory heights, while Ware constantly jabs, feints, and spars in response, creating a dynamic rhythmic and harmonic foundation that is at once hypnotic and stunning. These live sessions are must-have albums.

Ware was a disciple of bassists Israel Crosby and Jimmie Blanton. Crosby, a melodically creative bassist who played with the Horace Henderson band, the George Shearing Trio, and the Ahmad Jamal Trio, influenced most bassists who came up in the swing and bop eras. Blanton, known for his short but brilliant career with the Duke Ellington Orchestra, especially influenced Ware's rhythmic feeling, which was similarly percussive, interactive, and triplet-oriented. Crosby and Blanton were melodic bassists who used rhythm to enhance their

i INFO

Discuss all aspects of bass playing with John at the musicplayer.com LowDown Forum. Also visit John's website for sound samples, videos, and answers to all of your bass-related questions. johngoldsby.com

JOHN GOLDSBY

CONNECT

- Learn about the Wilbur Ware Institute, a non-profit dedicated to preserving the memory of the legendary bassist.
- Celebrate the legacy of Wilbur Ware with bassists Juini Booth, Bill Crow, Ray Drummond, Larry Ridley, and Rufus Reid.
- Read pianist Ethan Iverson's take on Wilbur Ware, Bass Genius at his "Do the Math" blog. bassplayer.com/april2014



harmonic and linear excursions; in contrast, Ware focused mainly on the rhythmic aspects of his playing. He played intense grooves and developed an aggressive, interactive rhythmic style into his trademark. Ware had a simple way of playing the bass, because he always went for the groove with a minimum of notes.

In his 1959 *Jazz Review* article "Introducing Wilbur Ware," bassist and author Bill Crow wrote, "Wilbur is, for me, a reaffirmation of the idea that deep expression can be reached through simplification of form—each new discovery need not always be a more complex one. Wilbur's terms are simple, and his artistic expression most profound."

Ware has a relatively "new" album out, thanks to the miracles of digital remastering, and especially

due to the wherewithal of Ware's close friend, tenor saxophonist Clifford Jordan (who also attended DuSable High School). Jordan saved master tapes that were originally recorded and released in 1969 under Ware's name, but never widely distributed. He passed the tapes on to Wilbur's wife, Gloria Ware, who brought the project back to life in 2012 [*Super Bass*, WWI/CD Baby]. *Super Bass* finds Ware leading a wonderfully modern post-bop group featuring drummer Ed Blackwell, trumpeter Don Cherry, and Clifford Jordan. As on Rollins' *A Night at the Village Vanguard*, this album is chord-less. Ware seems to flourish in situations with great harmonic freedom, unhindered by the specifics of piano or guitar voicings.

On the solo-bass cut "Symphony for Jr.," Ware

moves from rubato minor musings through several changes in groove, harmony, and form. The track finishes with Ware showing his roots and quoting Blanton's shout chorus on "Jack the Bear," almost in its entirety (see my March 2013 *Woodshed*). The opening track, "Mod House," is a medium-tempo walking groove in the dark key of B $\flat$ minor. **Example 1** shows Wilbur's solo excursion through the harmony of "Mod House," and highlights some of his trademark rhythmic devices. To understand Ware's playing, you have to hear and feel his magnificent quarter- and eighth-note lines. Search for the album and dig the bass playing! Note the following:

- The solo pickup bar is a simple arpeggiation of Cm to F, leading to the B $\flat$ m7 in bar 1.

EX. 1

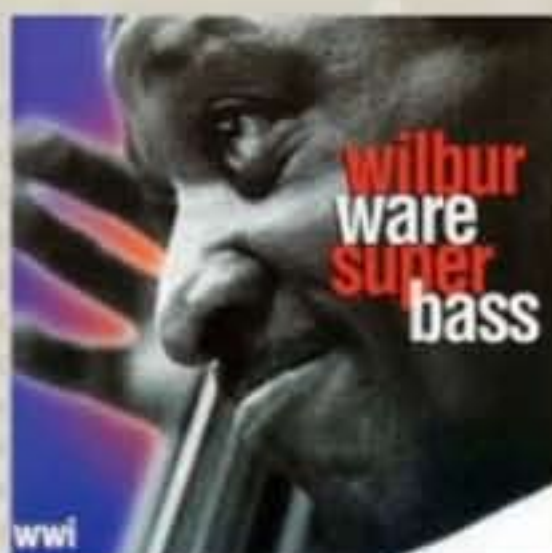
Triplet / swing eighths
♩ = 120
Solo pickup bar

Chords: B $\flat$ m7, Cm7 $\flat$ 5 F7 $\flat$ 9, B $\flat$ m7, Cm7 $\flat$ 5 F7 $\sharp$ 9, B $\flat$ 7, E7 $\sharp$ 11, E $\flat$ 7, Cm7, F7, D $\flat$ m7, G $\flat$ 7, D $\flat$ m7, G $\flat$ 7, D $\flat$ m7, G $\flat$ 7, Cm7, F7, B $\flat$ m7, F7, B $\flat$ m7.

Fingerings: 3 7 5 3 2 5 2, (3) 5 3 3 4 0, 1 3 4 2 (3), 3 10 6 3 5, 1 (3) 1 3 0, 1 5 5 3 2 5, 3 2 1 0 2 1 0, 3 8 12 3, 5 6 3 5 6 3, 4 4 4 4, 4 4 6 6 6 6, 4 4 6 4, 4 6 6 6, 4 4 6 4 3, 0 1 3 2 3 0 1, 1 1 5 4, 3 4 5 9, 10 12 14 15.



Selected **Wilbur Ware** Discography



As a leader *The Chicago Sound* [Wilbur Ware, Riverside, 1957]; *Super Bass* [Wilbur Ware, WWI/CD Baby, 2012].

As a sideman Zoot Sims, *Zoot!* [Riverside, 1956]; Thelonious Monk, *Monk's Music* [Riverside, 1957]; Clif-

ford Jordan, *Jenkins, Jordan and Timmons* [Prestige, 1957]; Thelonious Monk, *Thelonious Monk With John Coltrane* [Riverside, 1957]; Sonny Clark, *Dial "S" for Sonny* [Blue Note, 1957]; Sonny Rollins, *A Night at the Village Vanguard* [Blue Note, 1957]; Gerry Mulligan, *Mulligan Meets Monk* [Thelonious Monk, Riverside, 1957]; Grant Green, *Remembering* [Blue Note, 1961]; Charles Muffett, *The Gift* [Savoy, 1969]; Archie Shepp, *For Losers* [Impulse, 1969]; Clifford Jordan, *The Complete Clifford Jordan Strata-East Sessions* (Mosaic 6-CD set, also containing *Super Bass*).



• Notice the use of dead notes (percussive notes with the string not quite pushed all the way to the fingerboard) in bars 1–4. The dead notes are indicated by an x instead of a note head.

• Ware often uses short notes to create forward motion, as in bars 3, 5, 6, 9, and 11. The short notes are indicated by a dot over the note.

• In bar 6, he plays a triplet figure over the $E7\#11$ chord, leading into the $E\flat7$ in bar 7.

• In bar 16, Ware begins walking to finish his solo.

• Ware springs into the stratosphere in bar 17 for the beginning of Clifford Jordan's Coltranesque tenor solo.

Although Ware is not known as a flashy soloist, his playing—both solo and ensemble—speaks of passion and honesty. Jazz bass playing? Wilbur Ware is the real deal. In his meticulously written questionnaire for Leonard Feather's *Encyclopedia of Jazz*, Ware wrote, "I feel that the full potential of the bass as a jazz instrument has not been reached, and I hope to be one of those musicians who will realize its possibilities." **BP**

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BLUES YOU CAN USE

Tommy Shannon

Black Cat Bonin'

BY ED FRIEDLAND

LAST MONTH WE LOOKED AT THE WORK OF

Austin blues legend Keith Ferguson—but you can't talk about blues, bass, and Austin without paying homage to Tommy Shannon, the pillar of groove that upheld some of the greatest moments in blues/rock history. Well known for his tenure with Stevie Ray Vaughan & Double Trouble, Shannon had already made his mark as a member of the early Johnny Winter trio, recording three seminal albums with the group, as well as performing at Woodstock. On those first Winter records, Tommy's active-but-grounded approach to the blues was already well established, and his strong articulation and rhythmic surety made for some memorable bass lines.

Let's examine Tommy Shannon's playing on "Black Cat Bone," from Winter's 1968 *Progressive Blues Experiment* album. Recorded for Austin's Sonobeat Records and later re-released by Imperial, the album contains ten highly flammable tracks, and Shannon is the dude with the match. Along with rhythm section-mate "Uncle" John Turner on drums, the pair sharpen Winter's double-edged guitar/vocal attack and create a template for all future blues/rock power trios to follow. "Black Cat Bone" is a classic uptempo Texas shuffle in *E* that clips along at 130 BPM, and Shannon comes out swinging from the first beat of the intro, hammering the triplet rhythm with power and accuracy. **Example 1** is essentially what he plays on

the first vocal chorus, and the line remains mostly intact throughout the track.

The rhythmic basis of the line is the "double-stroke" shuffle, combining "box" patterns (R-5-♭7-8) with chromatic connecting runs that are classic blues material. Bar 1 establishes the 8-♭7-5 pattern with a motif of a chromatic triplet on beat *four*, the main element for most of this line. Bar 2 transposes the pattern to the IV chord (A7) and bounces off the open *A* to set up a chromatic return to the I chord. In bar 4, Shannon steps it up with triplets on beats *three* and *four*, the box shape lying perfectly under the hand, and sets up the IV chord in bar 5, where he changes to a pattern that echoes "Killing Floor" for two bars. Bars 7 and 8 go back to the *E* box pattern with the triplet on beat *four*, but notice how Tommy uses a different triplet run in each bar. Bar 7's triplet sets up the root of the I chord in bar 8, while bar 8's triplet sets up the V chord in bar 9. Bars 9 and 10 use the "Killing Floor" pattern for the V-IV movement. The form ends with a classic Elmore James-style turnaround, a descending line from the octave of the I chord to the root of the V chord. (Coincidentally, this is turnaround No. 2 from my *Blues Bass* instructional book.) While there is much to be learned from Shannon's work with SRV, check into his early recordings with Winter to hear a player with well-established chops and feel, laying it down for real—for the first time.



INFO

ED FRIEDLAND

Ed "the Bass Whisperer" Friedland plays, writes, and teaches out of his bass base in Austin, Texas.
edfriedland.com

LISTEN



Johnny Winter, *Progressive Blues Experiment* [Sonobeat, 1968; reissued Imperial, 1969]

I hope you enjoy learning these lines as much as I enjoy transcribing them. While I happily write down these examples for your education and entertainment, I'd like to suggest that you can transcribe on your own, as well. Whether you write out a line in standard notation, or simply listen and learn how to play it, transcribing bass parts from recordings is a critical part of your musical development. It develops your ears and your instinct for bass lines, and if you take the final step of writing out lines, you'll gain a much deeper understanding of the musical information contained within. Being able to quickly pick up songs and bass lines by ear is something musicians are required to do—start getting together your transcription chops now! **BP**



Double Trouble's triple threat: Chris Layton, Stevie Ray Vaughan, Tommy Shannon.

EX. 1

Shuffle eighths
♩ = 130

E7

A7

E7

A7

E7

B7

A7

E7

B7

7 7 5 5 2 2 5 6 7

7 7 5 5 7 0 4 5 6

7 7 5 5 7 7 5 6 7

7 7 5 5 7 5 7 7 5 7

5 5 4 4 5 7 7 5 7

5 5 4 4 5 5 6 6

7 7 5 5 7 7 5 6 7

7 7 5 5 7 7 5 6 7

7 7 6 6 7 7/9 9

5 5 4 4 5 5 6 6

7 7 5 5 4 4 3 3

2 0 1 2 2 2



TRANSCRIPTION

james gang rides again

SIDE ONE 1. Funk #49 2. Asshtonpark 3. Woman 4. The Bomber A. Closet Queen B. Cast Your Fate To The Wind.
SIDE TWO 1. Tend My Garden 2. Garden Gate 3. There I Go Again 4. Thanks 5. Ashes The Rain and I



Gang of three: Jim Fox, Dale Peters, and Joe Walsh

“Funk #49” By James Gang

Dale Peters' Complete Bass Line

BY BRIAN FOX

CLEVELAND, OHIO. THOUGH IT MAY TAKE LUMPS FOR THE FAMOUSLY heinous snubs of its resident Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (Deep Purple, anyone? Iron Maiden? YES?!), this much is clear: Cleveland rocks. While the Buckeye State's southland is an undisputed hotbed of funk, birthing such bands as the Ohio Players, Lakeside, Slave, and Bootsy's Rubber Band, the northern stretch by the banks of the Cuyahoga has raised more than its fair share of rock royals: Devo, Nine Inch Nails, the Black Keys, to name a few. Founded in Cleveland in 1966, the James Gang is one of that city's most enduring contributions to rock & roll. Anchored by powerhouse drummer Jim Fox, the James Gang saw its lineup change considerably throughout the outfit's original incarnation, which lasted through 1977. For many, the band reached its peak with the 1970 lineup of Fox, guitarist Joe Walsh, and bassist Dale Peters.

i INFO

LISTEN

james gang
rides again

James Gang, *James Gang Rides Again*
[ABC, 1970]

CONNECT

Play along with
“Funk #49,” and
dig on a live
version of the
Gang's other big
hit, 1971's “Walk
Away.” bassplayer.com/april2014



Those wanting to hear the Gang at its greatest need not look beyond its sophomore offering, *James Gang Rides Again*. Produced by Bill Szymczyk, whose star would rise alongside Walsh's following work with the Eagles, the album kicks off with "Funk #49," a laid-back groove with heavy syncopation that sees the Gang at the top of its game. For his part, Peters relies on a unique Fender Precision/Telecaster Bass hybrid that combined features of early- and late-'50s P-Basses. Digging in with a pick and plugging into an Acoustic 360/361 rig, Peters coaxes equal parts grunt and grind, leaving little doubt why the venerable P-Bass is the axe of choice for so many rock bass icons, and why the mighty Acoustic 360/361 was the chosen rig for rockers and funkateers alike.

Actin' Right

Following Walsh's 4-bar intro, Peters launches into the song's main bass line. Right off the bat, stylistic hallmarks of the groove leap out; as you read through the tune, pay particular attention to the hammer-ons, pull-offs, ghost notes, slides, and chromatic runs that give the groove its grease. The syncopated feel of the intro carries into the first verse, at **Letter A**,

and into the unison riff in bars 9–16. At bar 16's "and" of *three*, hold and savor that *E*, the root of the *E7#9* often referred to as the "Hendrix chord." At bar 17, Peters begins to push beyond the predominantly pentatonic scalar nature of the line in beat *one*, seeming to hint at the development of the theme to come. He continues to develop his line in the second verse at **Letter C**, then settles into the repeating unison riff at **Letter D**. At **Letter E**'s drum solo, it's all about the cowbell—sit back and enjoy the rest before building back into the bass line in bar 52. By midway through the third and final verse, Peters is fully immersed in the groove, and he begins to flesh out his line with denser arpeggios in bar 69 and longer chromatic runs in bars 71 and 73. In the outro at bar 78, he teases the ear with an R&B-flavored motif he explores further in bars 83–84. As fate would have it, just as Peters, Fox, and Walsh are settling deep into the groove, the track fades out.

The landscape of rock & roll—like that of Cleveland—has changed profoundly since 1970. The famous Cuyahoga "River of Fire" has cleaned up its act considerably since the conflagration of 1969. Fortunately, every bit of that era's grit remains in Dale Peters' powerful P-Bass tracks. Dig in! **BP**

"Funk #49" By James Gang Transcription by Brian Fox

♩ = 92

The score is divided into three systems of music. The first system (bars 1-4) includes a triplet of eighth notes, a pull-off (PO), and hammer-ons (H). The second system (bars 5-8) continues the groove with hammer-ons and pull-offs. The third system (bars 9-12) features a unison riff with slides (S) and a 'No Chords' (N.C.) section. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, pull-offs, hammer-ons, and slides, along with chord symbols (A7, D) and fretboard diagrams.

Funk #49 Words and Music by Joe Walsh, Dale Peters and James Fox. Copyright © 1970 SONGS OF UNIVERSAL, INC. and HOME MADE MUSIC. Copyright Renewed. All Rights Controlled and Administered by SONGS OF UNIVERSAL, INC. All Rights Reserved Used by Permission. Reprinted by Permission of Hal Leonard Corporation.



15 **E7#9** **A7** **D A7** **D** **A7**

19 **C** **A7** **D A7** **D** **A7** **D A7** **D** **A7**

23 **D** **N.C.** **N.C.**

29 **E7#9** **A7** **D A7** **D** **A7**

33 **E** Drum solo **16** **3** **A7** **D A7** **D** **A7**

55 **F** **A7** **D A7** **D** **A7** **D A7** **D** **A7**

59 **G** **N.C.** **N.C.**

The transcription shows a bass line with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and various articulations (S for slurs, H for hammer-ons, and a cross for a pull-off). Fingering numbers (1-5) are provided for many notes. Chord symbols (E7#9, A7, D A7, D, N.C.) are placed above the staff. Section markers C, D, E, F, and G are enclosed in boxes. The drum solo section (E) features a 16-measure solo followed by a 3-measure solo.

65

A7 D A7 D A7

S H H H

69

D A7 D A7 D A7 D A7

H H H H

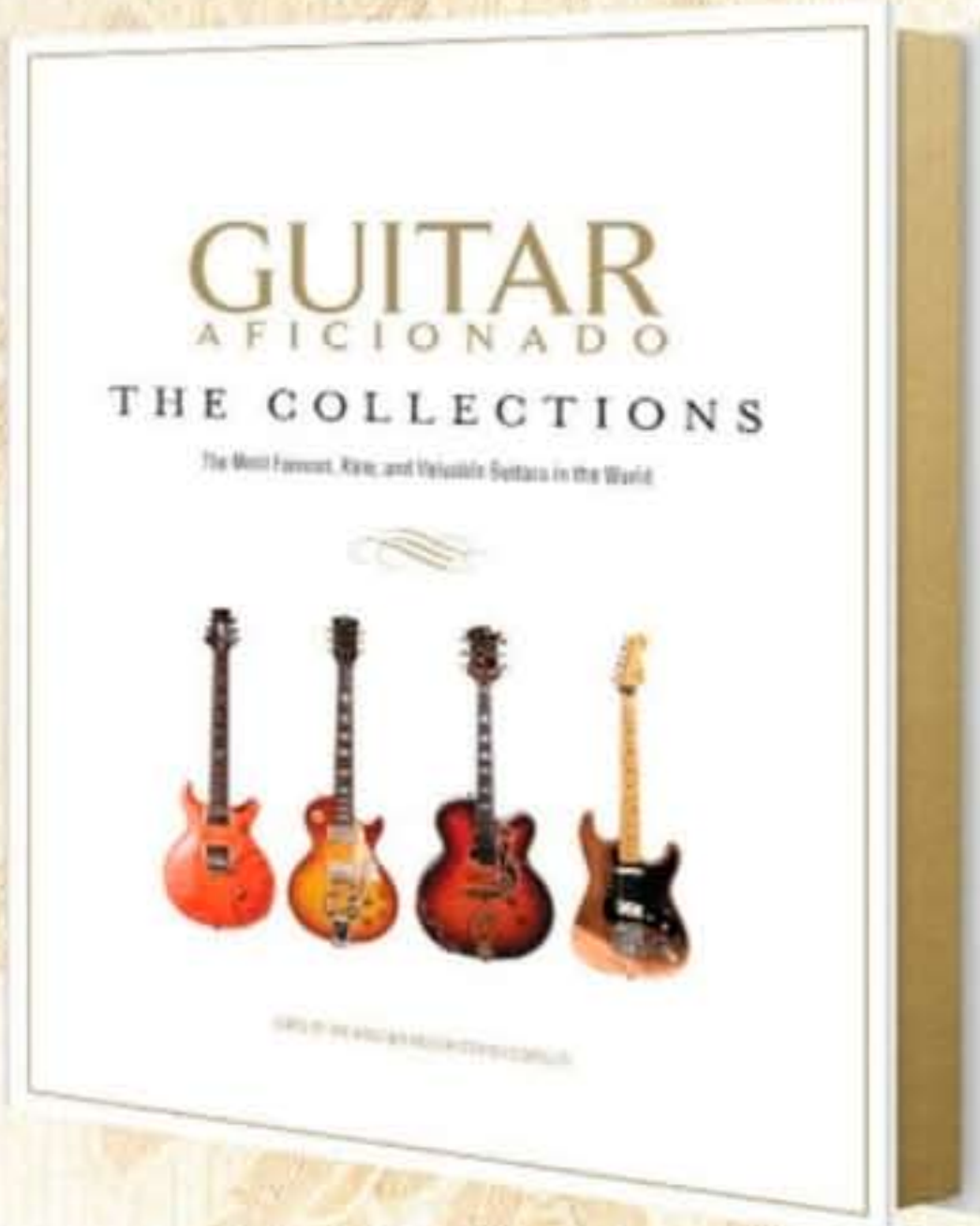
73

D A7 D A7 D A7 D A7

H H H H

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77

D A7 D A7 D A7 D A7

81

D A7 D A7 D A7

84

D A7 D A7 D A7 Fade

Handwritten transcription of a bass line in D major/A7, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and fingerings (7, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0).

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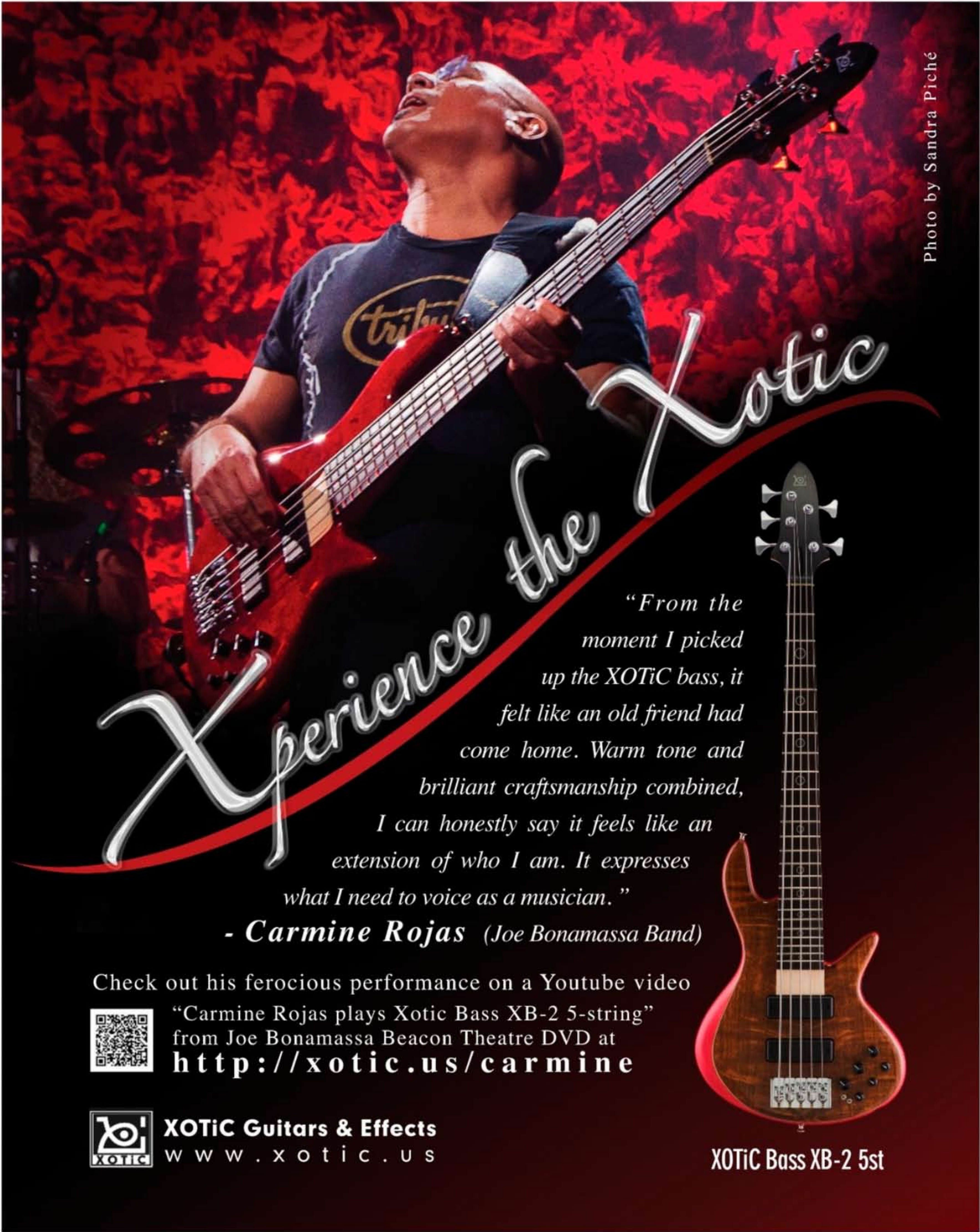
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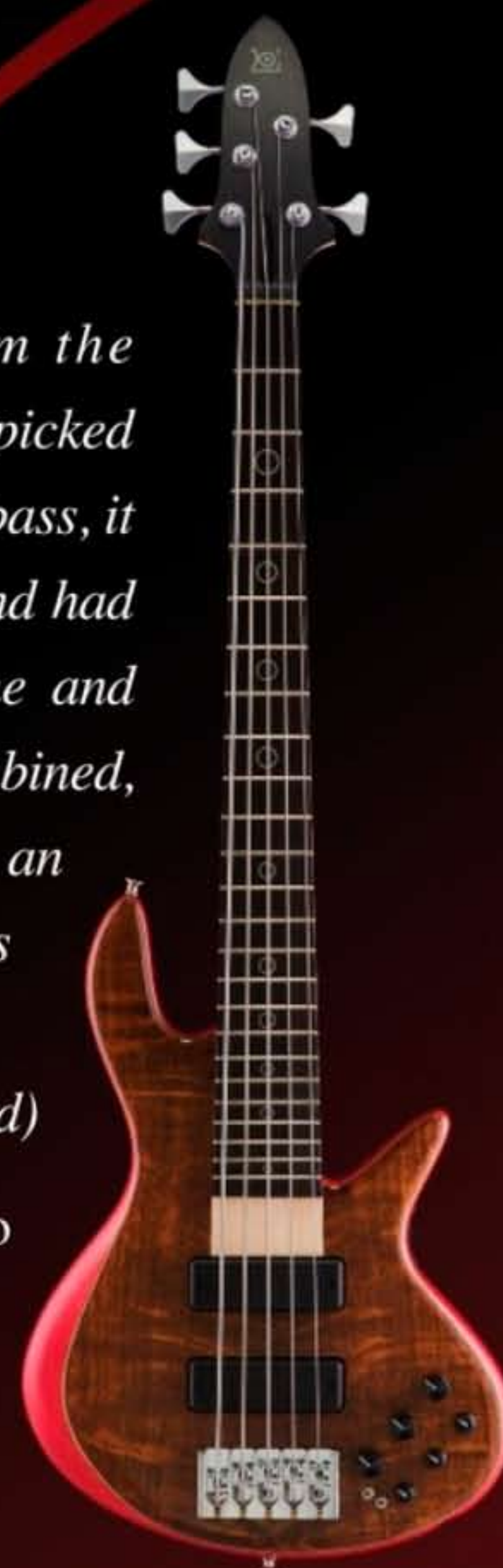


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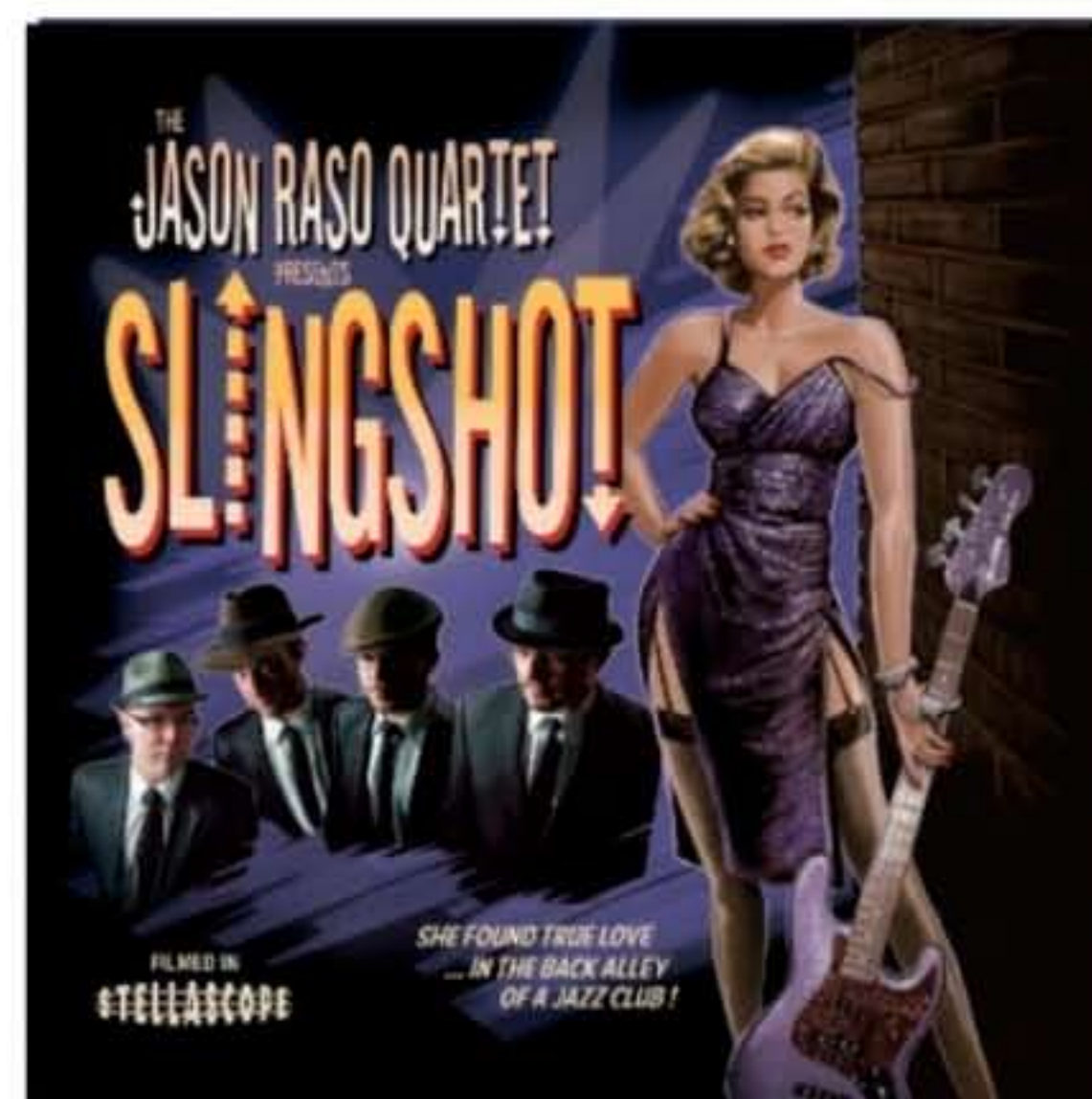
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I'VE BEEN HOOKED ON BASS FOR MOST OF MY TIME HERE

on earth. I've always been a Fender Jazz Bass guy, but somehow, throughout my life, Precisions have always called out to me, saying, "Hey, check me out! Take me home. Buy me!"

A long time ago, when I lived in San Francisco, there was a music store in my neighborhood, on Ocean Avenue, called Blackjack's. It was a used/vintage music store; they didn't carry new stuff. One day, when I was in seventh grade, I went to Blackjack's just to look around, and then I saw it: A beautiful, lightweight, two-tone sunburst 1957 Fender Precision Bass with a maple neck and an anodized pickguard. It looked almost brand new; the neck had a soft "V" shape, and it was strung up with black tapewound strings. There was only one problem: I had to come up with the \$550 to buy it. Crackers! I was in love with that bass; now I just had to figure out how I was going to get the dough to buy it. I tried hard to save the money—I had a paper route; I collected empty soda pop bottles; I mowed lawns; I washed cars. Every day, after school, I would go look at that bass, and sometimes, I'd even get to play it. But I just couldn't save the money fast enough. One day, I went to Blackjack's and my bass was gone. Man, I felt so empty after I found out that they'd sold my bass—in my heart, at least, it was already mine!

I finally bought my first Precision while I was working at Don Wehr's Music City as a warehouse boy. I was 15. It was a Black P-Bass with a white pickguard and a maple neck that was "A"-shaped (a Jazz Bass neck on a Precision Bass body). Even with the upcharge for the "A" neck and another upcharge for the black finish, a custom color, it was still only \$254 plus tax. About three years later, I sold it for \$250 so I could pay rent. My second Precision, an anodized-pickguard/maple-neck '57 P-Bass, was a wedding present from Billy Stapleton and Steve Bowman. That was the bass I traded to Norman Harris, along with \$100, for the 1961 stack-pot Fender Jazz, the Shark Bass I wrote about in January and February.

After all that, I always wanted a 1957 or 1958 anodized-pickguard Precision. Fast-forward to 1998. I put the word out that I was looking for a '57/'58 P.



Lowell Levinger, aka "Banana," calls me up and tells me that my bass is at Elderly Instruments, so I go online, and heck! There it is: a 1958 Fender Precision with a maple neck and anodized pickguard. I can't believe it! It's beat up, but it's beautifully beat up.

So the next day, I get up, call Elderly Instruments, and ask if they still have the '58. "Yes." How much? "\$2,500." Is it stock? "Yes. It's all there." What if I don't like it? "Just send it back." I'll take it!

When the bass came, I opened the case, and holy cow... it was beautiful! It was two-tone sunburst, and the neck had the coolest weather checking I'd ever seen. The pickguard was worn just right, and it was all there, including both covers and a thumb rest. Mac & cheese! I had an old set of La Bella flats that had come on my 1955 P, and I put them on the '58. Man, what a sound! James Jamerson. Chuck Rainey. Duck Dunn. Carl Radle. So far, I've used this bass on a Mickey Thomas recording session, and on gigs with KVHW (with Steve Kimock, Alan Hertz, and Ray White) and VHL (with Hertz and Eric Levy).

Well, there you have it. If you hang in there long enough, sometimes you get lucky. May the groove be with us! —BOBBY VEGA

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